NEIL GAIMAN • JOHN ROMITA JR.

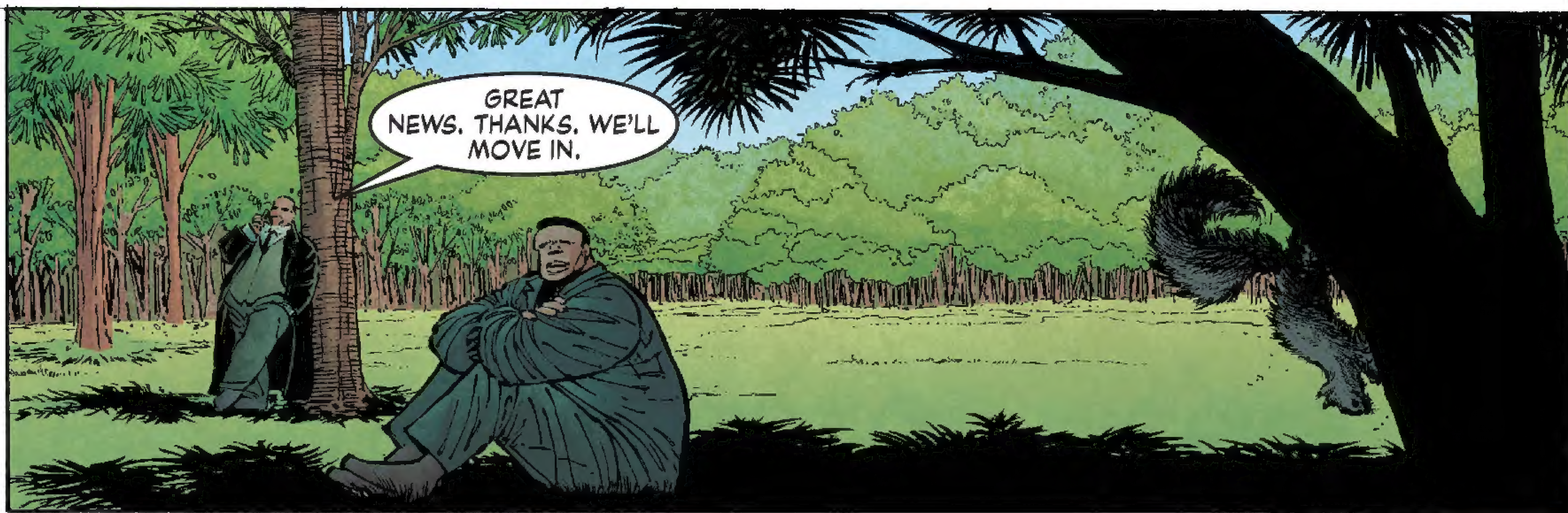
ETERNALS™

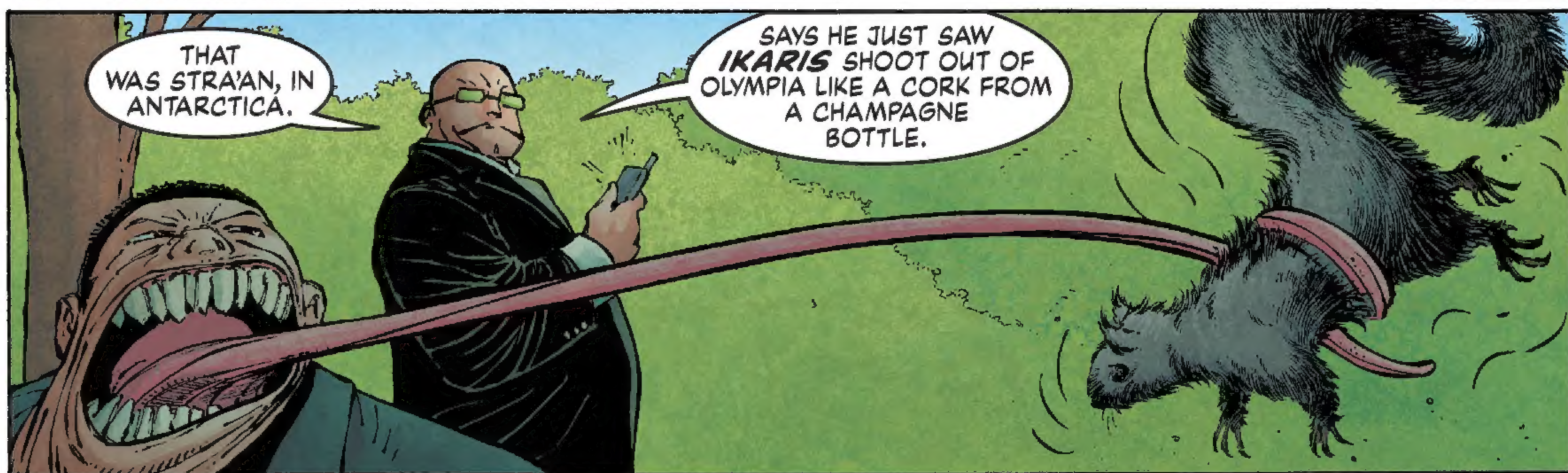
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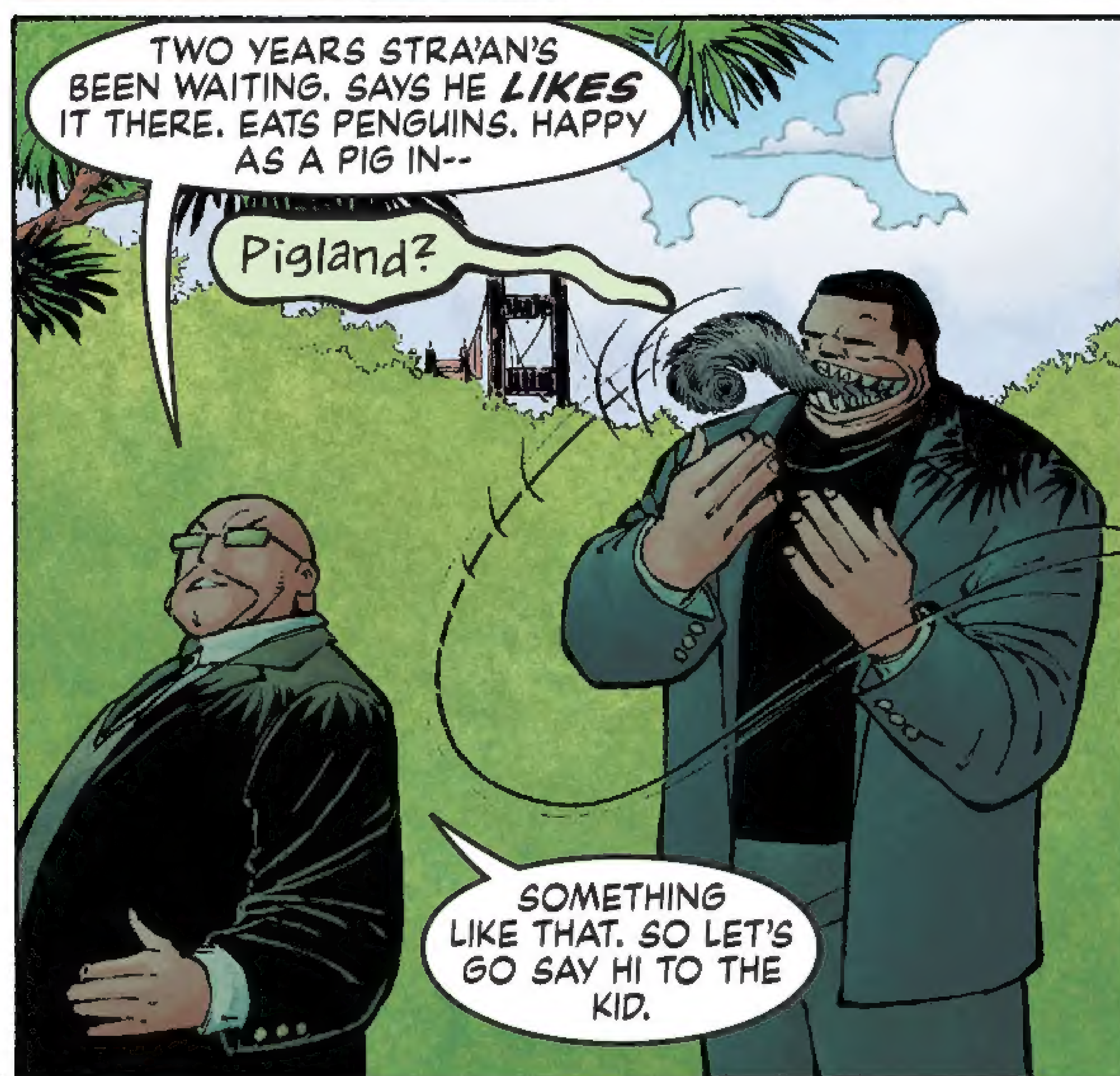
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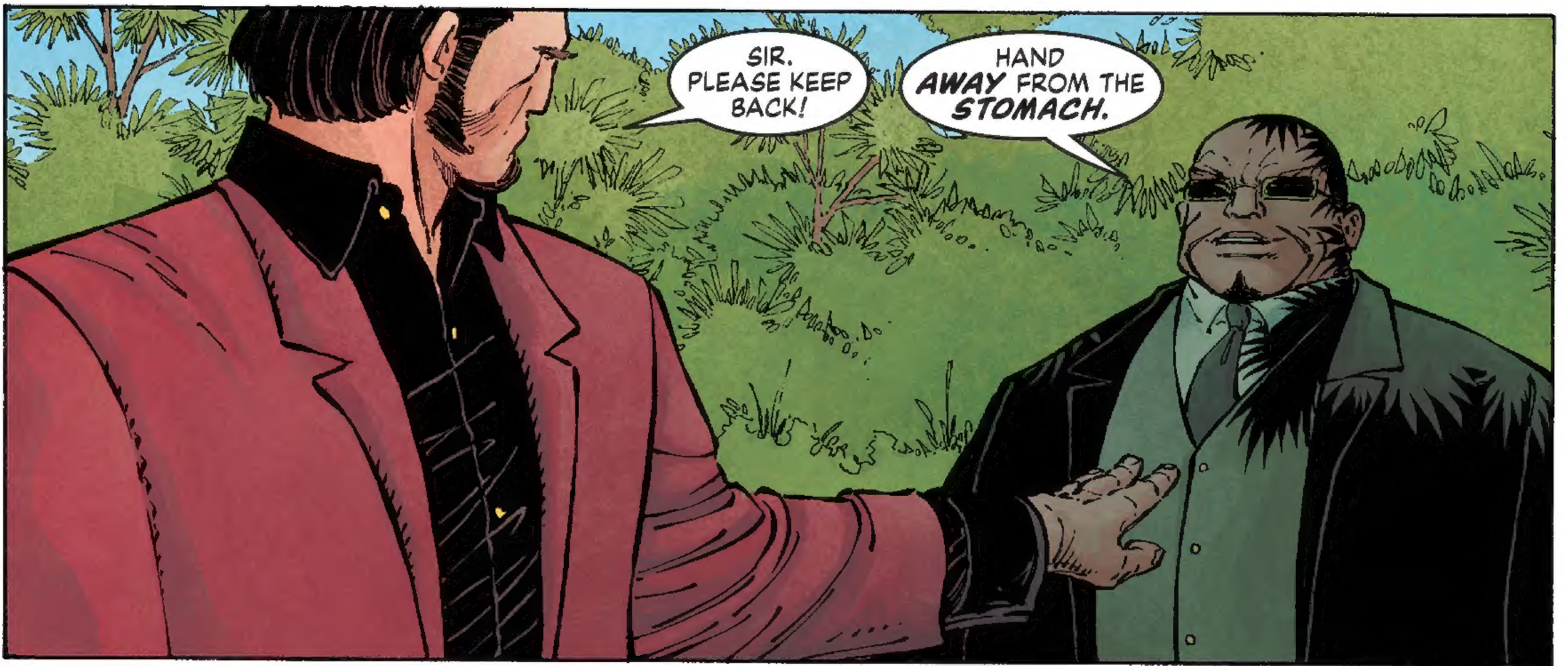

GREAT NEWS. THANKS. WE'LL MOVE IN.


THAT WAS STRA'AN, IN ANTARCTICA.
SAYS HE JUST SAW IKARIS SHOOT OUT OF OLYMPIA LIKE A CORK FROM A CHAMPAGNE BOTTLE.


TWO YEARS STRA'AN'S BEEN WAITING. SAYS HE LIKES IT THERE. EATS PENGUINS. HAPPY AS A PIG IN--
Pigland?
SOMETHING LIKE THAT. SO LET'S GO SAY HI TO THE KID.


May as well.
Here they come.
HEY! HEY-- SPRITE! I'M A BIG FAN!


PLEASE DON'T DISTURB THE KID. PLEASE RESPECT HIS PRIVACY.
WE AREN'T DISTURBING HIM. WE JUST WANT TO TALK TO HIM.
Auto...graph... hunters.


SIR. PLEASE KEEP BACK!
HAND AWAY FROM THE STOMACH.


SIR. PLEASE.
DON'T TOUCH THE STOMACH. I MEAN IT.




AAAHH...

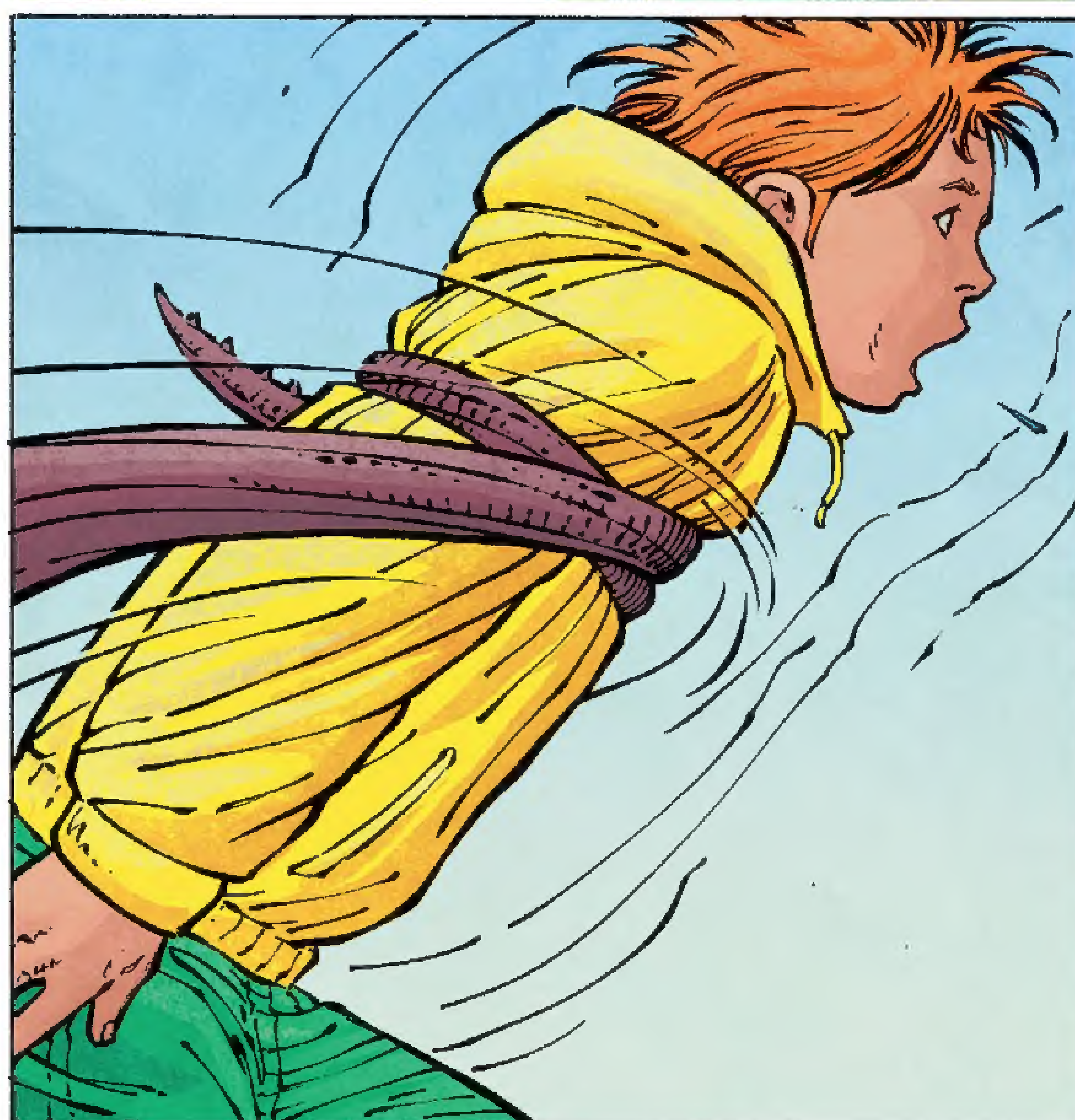

CAN'T SAY I DIDN'T WARN YOU.
You warned him. I heard you.
YOU SHOULD GO TO THE HOSPITAL NOW. OR DIE. EITHER'S FINE.


SO, YOU WANT TO TAKE YOUR FRIEND TO THE HOSPITAL? OR DO YOU WANT TO DIE WITH HIM? YOUR CALL.


UHHH...THE HOSPITAL?
GOOD CALL.

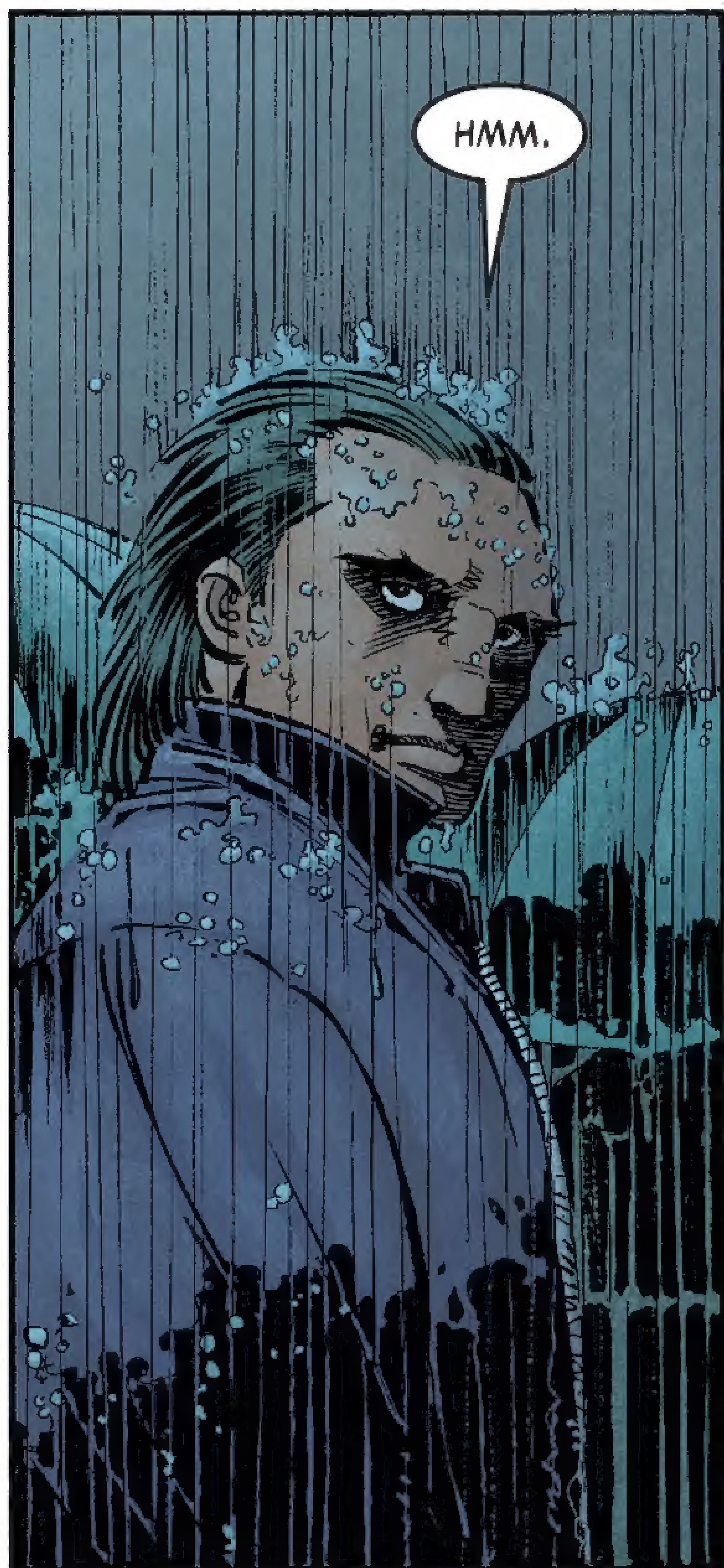

"GO FAR AND GO FAST...


"...AND DO NOT LOOK BACK."




Tag. You're it.

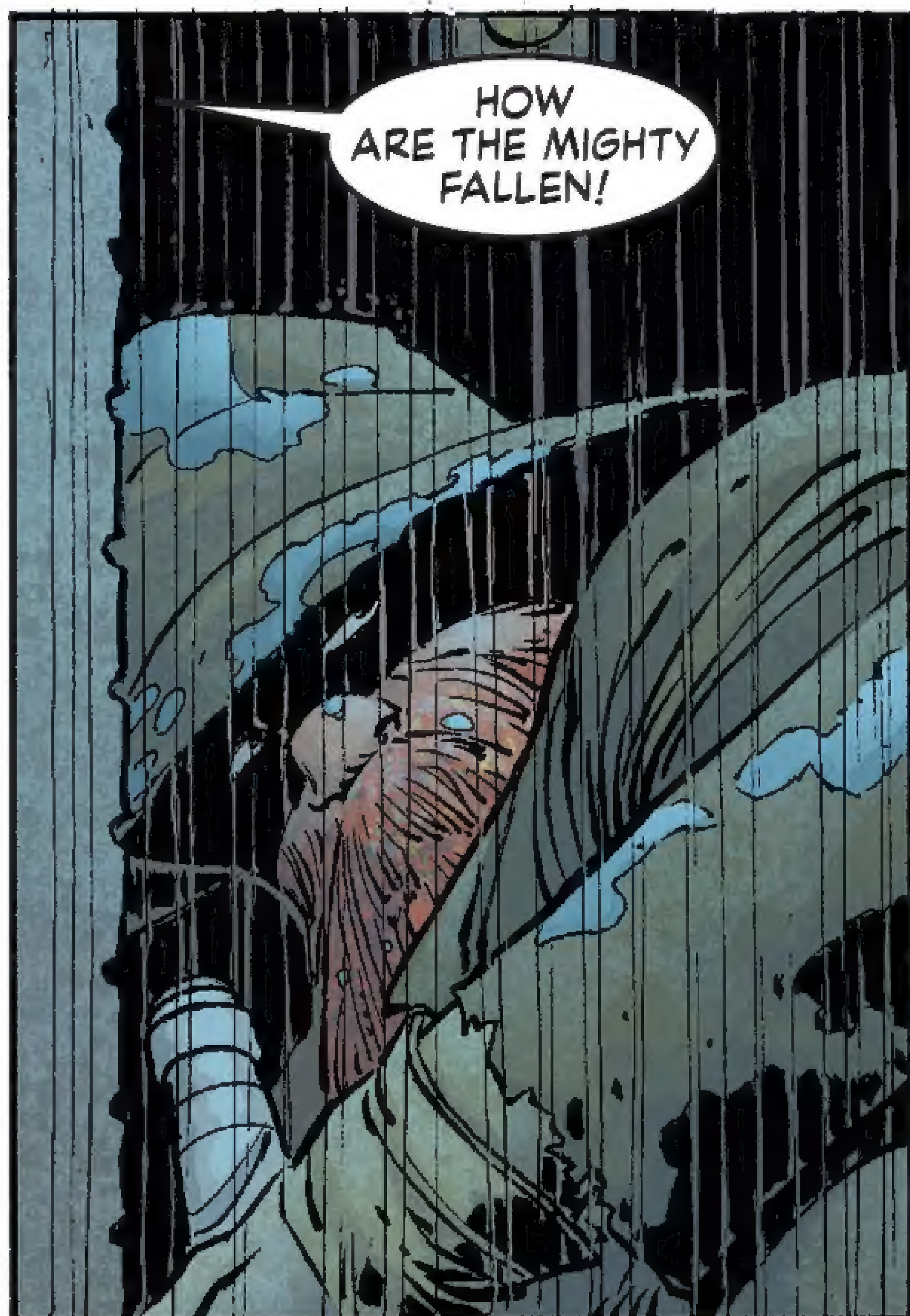

MANHATTAN.



HMM.








HOW ARE THE MIGHTY FALLEN!

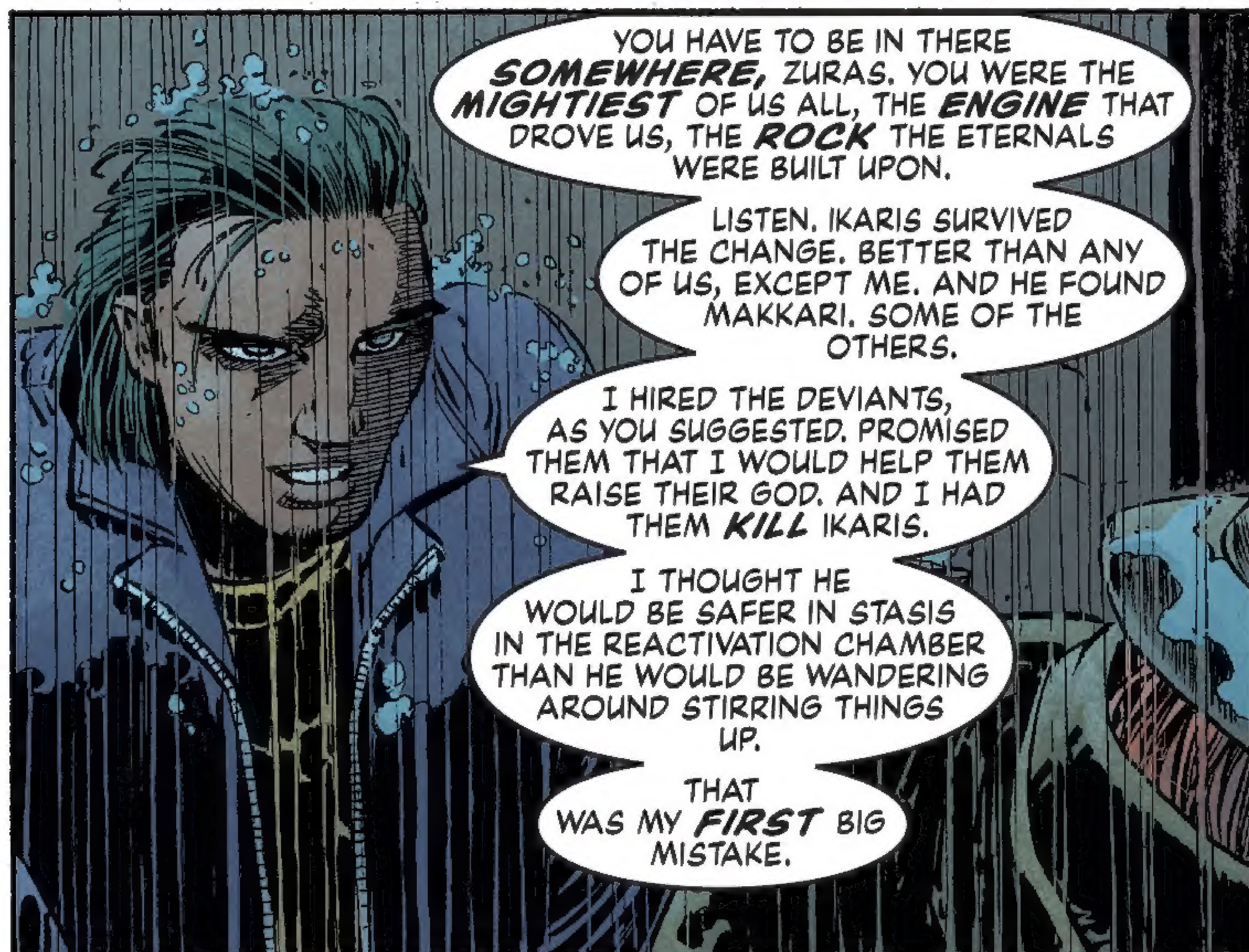

RROW! ROW!
DO NOT WORRY, SMALL ONE. I WILL NOT HURT THE OLD MAN.
WAKE UP, ZURAS. IT'S TIME. IT HAS BEGUN.


LEAVE M'ALONE. DIDN'T HURT YOU. ALL ONE. ALL ONE.


DO YOU KNOW WHO I AM?
I AM AJAK. I AM HE WHO SPEAKS TO CELESTIALS. I AM YOUR FRIEND.
G'WAY.


MIGHTY ZURAS. FIRST AND WISEST. YOU ENTRUSTED ME WITH A MISSION, IN THE FINAL SPASM OF THE UNI-MIND. AND I HAVE DONE EVERYTHING YOU COMMANDED. THE TIMES ARE CHANGING. WE MUST GO.
STAY HERE. GOT DOG.
YOU HAVE A DOG. AND YOU ARE ZURAS.
I AM...
ALL ONE...


NO LONGER. BUT SOON WE WILL BE ALL ONE AGAIN. THE ETERNALS ARE RETURNING, LORD.
DO YOU UNDERSTAND ANYTHING I AM SAYING?


YOU HAVE TO BE IN THERE SOMEWHERE, ZURAS. YOU WERE THE MIGHTIEST OF US ALL, THE ENGINE THAT DROVE US, THE ROCK THE ETERNALS WERE BUILT UPON.
LISTEN. IKARIS SURVIVED THE CHANGE. BETTER THAN ANY OF US, EXCEPT ME. AND HE FOUND MAKKARI. SOME OF THE OTHERS.
I HIRED THE DEVIANTS, AS YOU SUGGESTED. PROMISED THEM THAT I WOULD HELP THEM RAISE THEIR GOD. AND I HAD THEM KILL IKARIS.
I THOUGHT HE WOULD BE SAFER IN STASIS IN THE REACTIVATION CHAMBER THAN HE WOULD BE WANDERING AROUND STIRRING THINGS UP.
THAT WAS MY FIRST BIG MISTAKE.

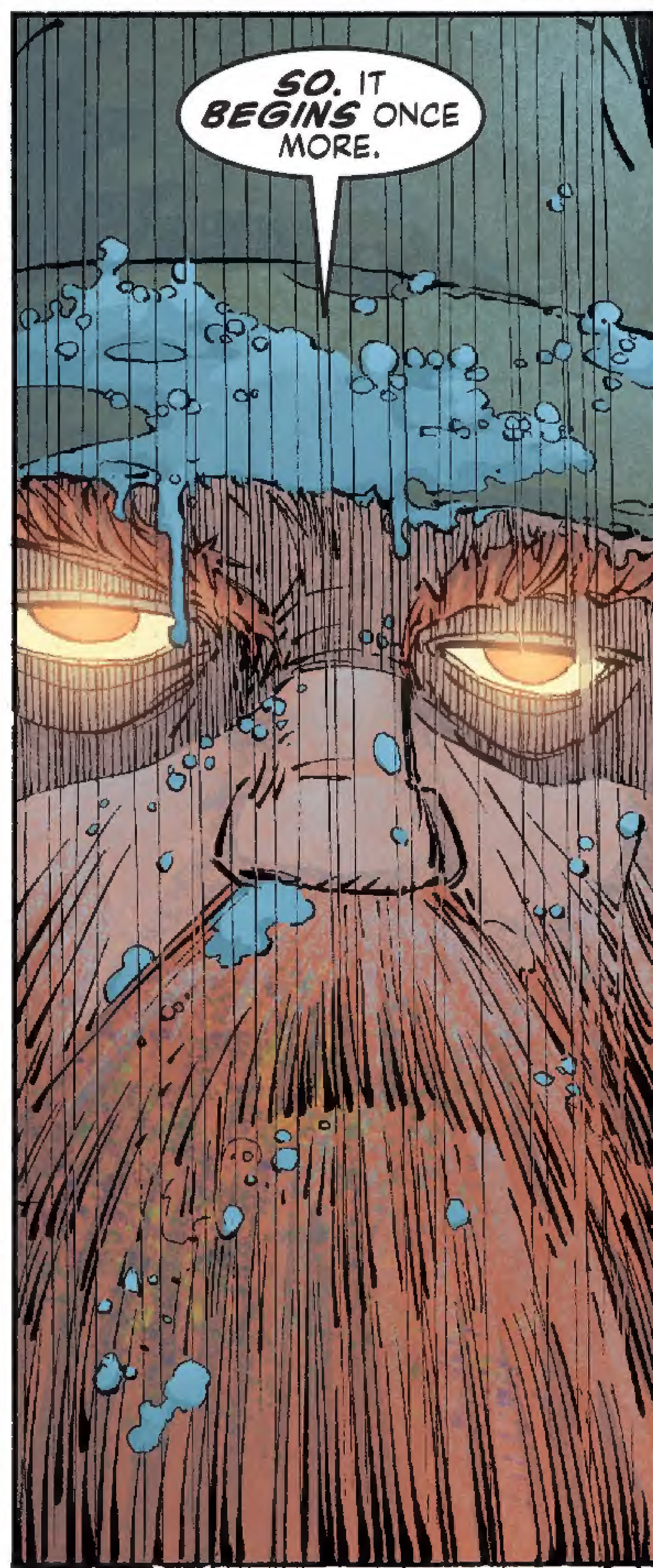

HE DIED WHEN FOUR OF US--MAKKARI, SERSI, DRUIG AND THENA--WERE IN PHYSICAL PROXIMITY AND UNDER STRESS. THEY FORMED THE BEGINNINGS OF A UNI-MIND.
THAT WAS MY SECOND MISTAKE.
I WAS OVER-CONFIDENT.


IKARIS IS FULLY REACTIVATED. THE OTHER FOUR WILL NOT REACTIVATE COMPLETELY UNTIL THEY GO THROUGH A DEATH AND REBUILD, BUT THEY ARE NO LONGER HUMAN.
NOW MY DEVIANTS HAVE DEMANDED THEIR PAYMENT. I THOUGHT I HAD TIME. SO MUCH MORE TIME. I WAS WRONG.
YOU KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS?
NEED... SOMEFA... DRINK...
IF THE DREAMING CELESTIAL WAKES, THEN THE HORDE WILL COME. WHETHER WE DEFEAT HIM OR NOT. WHETHER WE SURVIVE OR NOT.


THE HORDE WILL COME. AND THEY WILL CLEANSE THIS PART OF THE GALAXY OF THE DISEASE CALLED LIFE.




AJAK...?

YOUR SERVANT AND YOUR SUBJECT, LORD ZURAS.
WE ARE... *ETERNALS.*
WE SERVE LIFE. WE GUARD THE EARTH. WE PRESERVE AND WE MAINTAIN.
YES, LORD.

SO. IT *BEGINS* ONCE MORE.

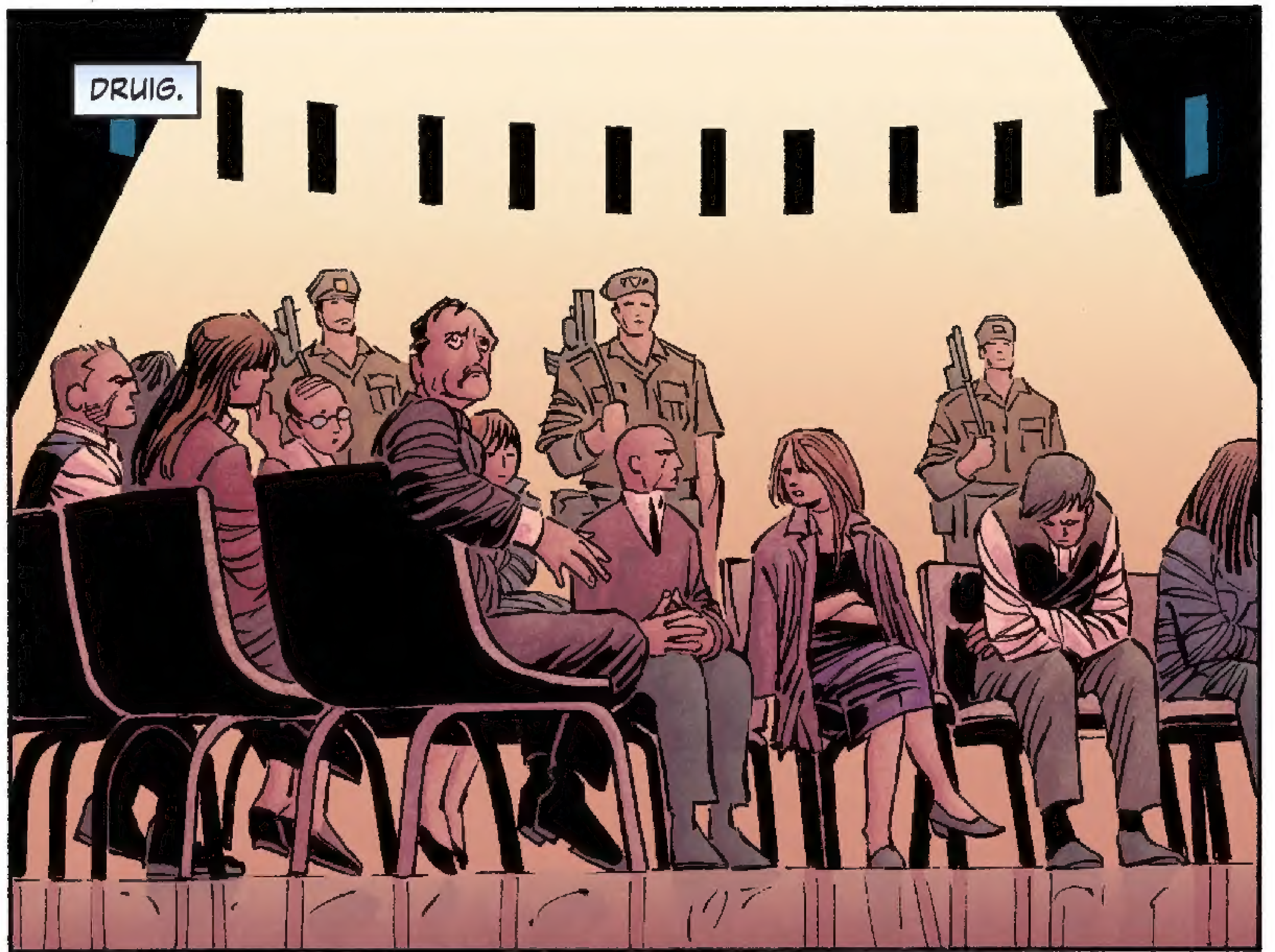

MAKKARI.

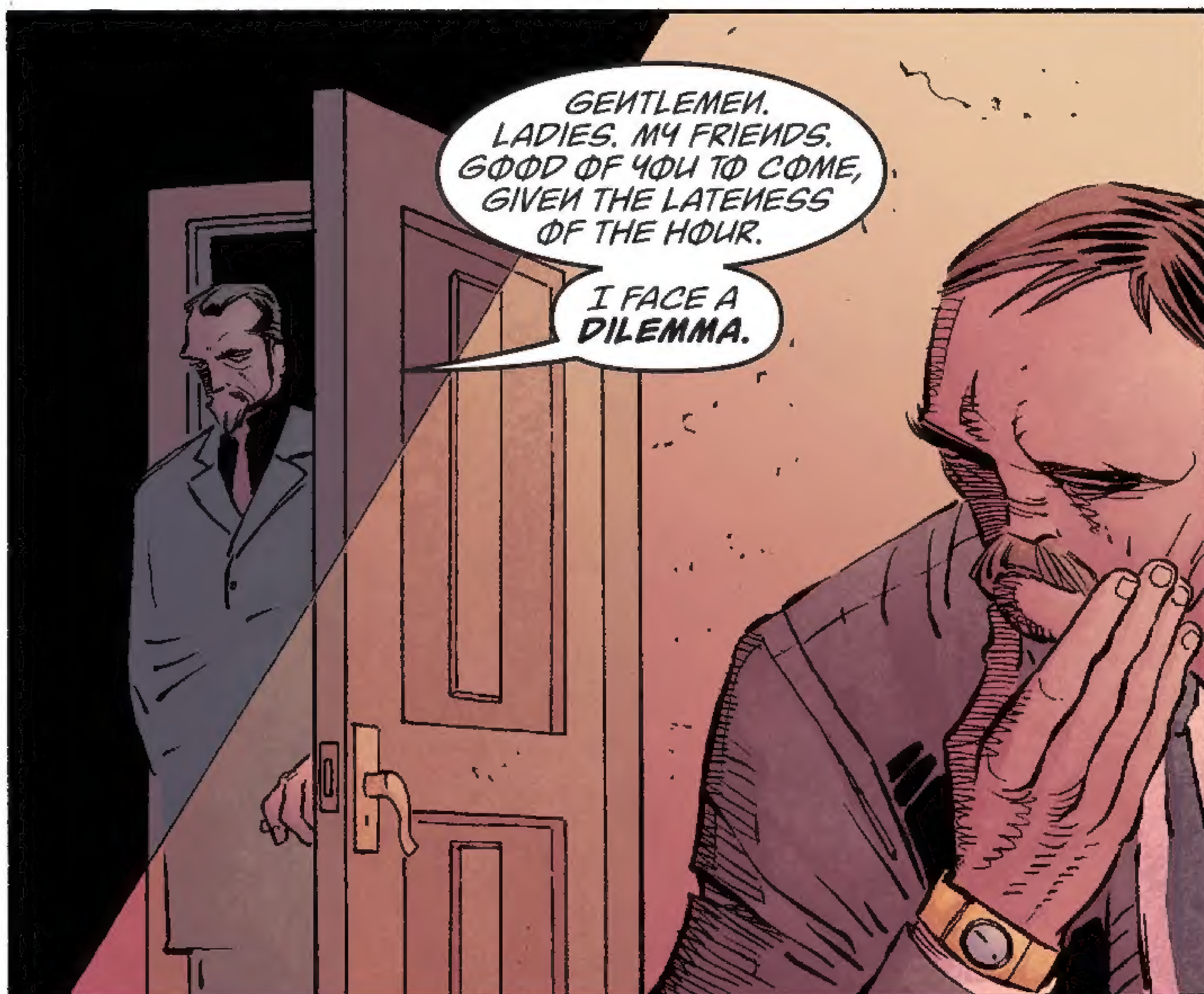

SOMETHING


SOMETHING
THERE IS THA

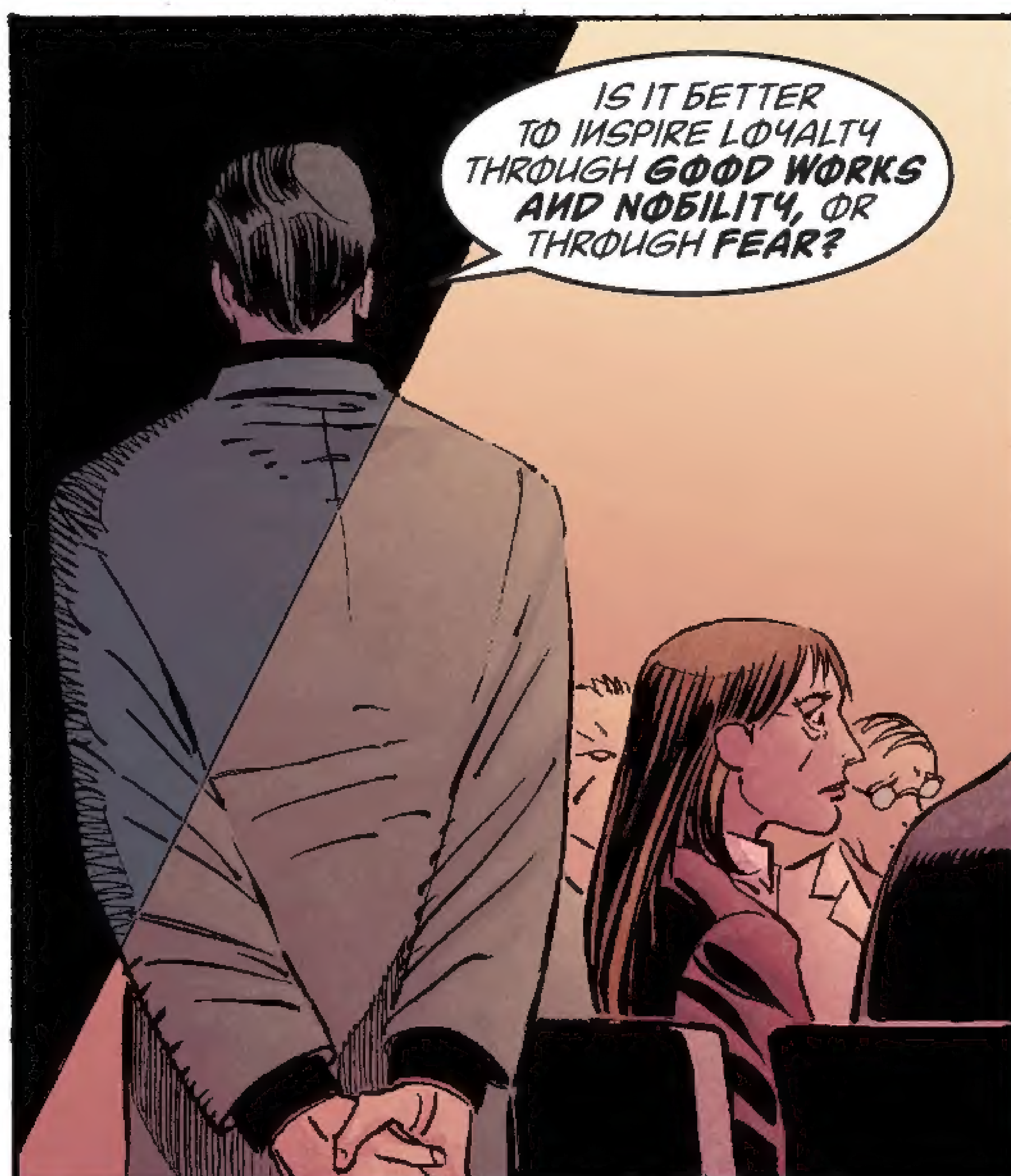

SOMETHING THERE IS THAT DISTURBS MY SLUMBER.


VOROZHEIKA. PARLIAMENT HOUSE.

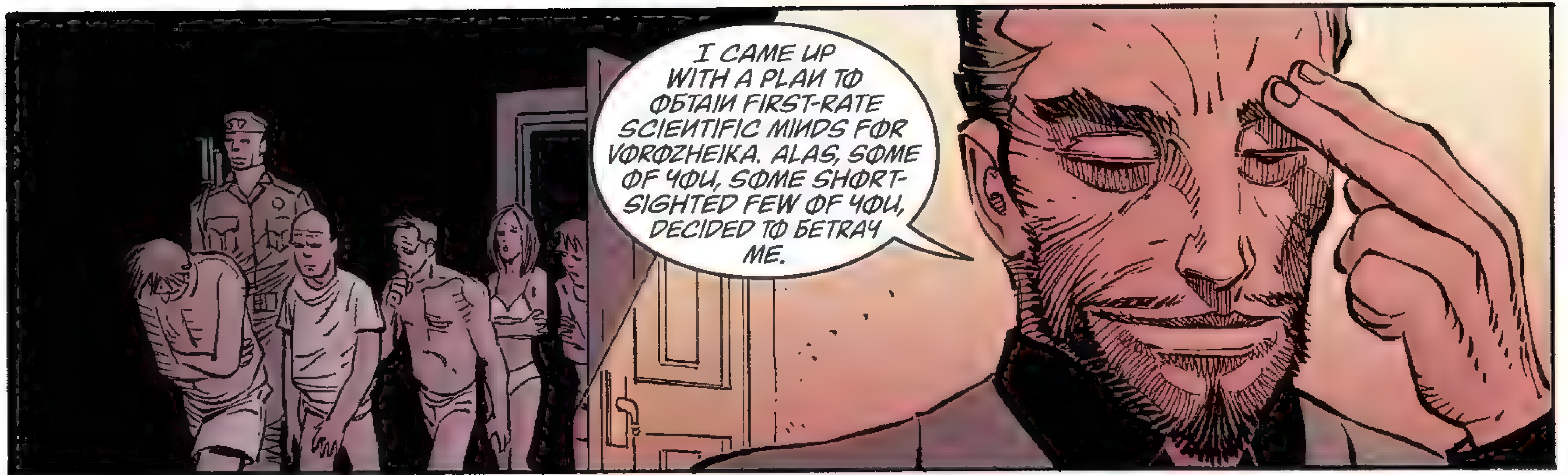

DRUIG.

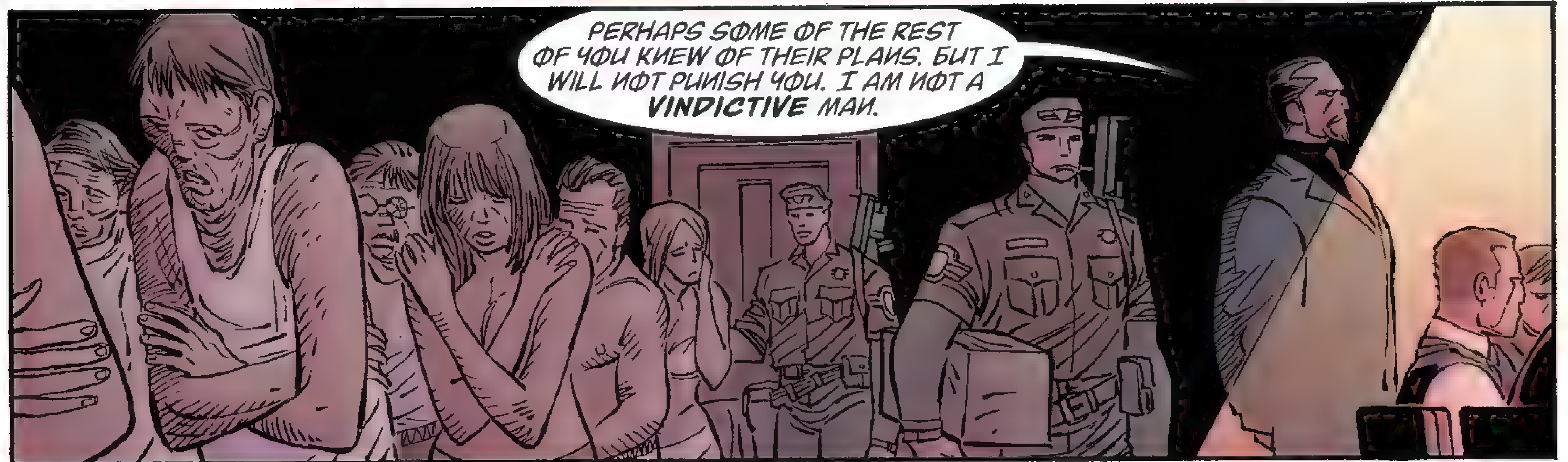

GENTLEMEN. LADIES. MY FRIENDS. GOOD OF YOU TO COME, GIVEN THE LATENESS OF THE HOUR.
I FACE A **DILEMMA.**


LOYALTY.

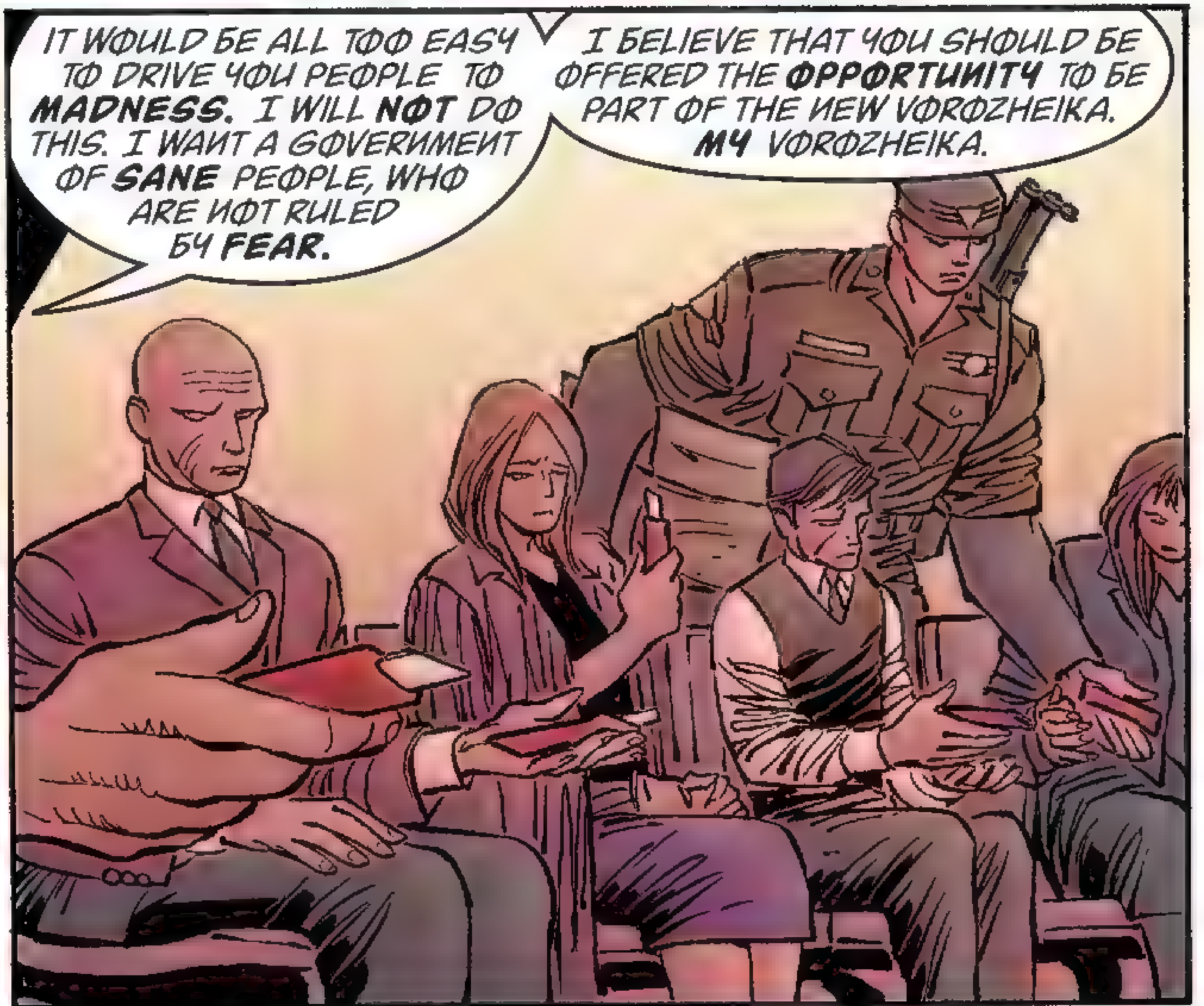

IS IT BETTER TO INSPIRE LOYALTY THROUGH **GOOD WORKS AND NOBILITY,** OR THROUGH **FEAR?**

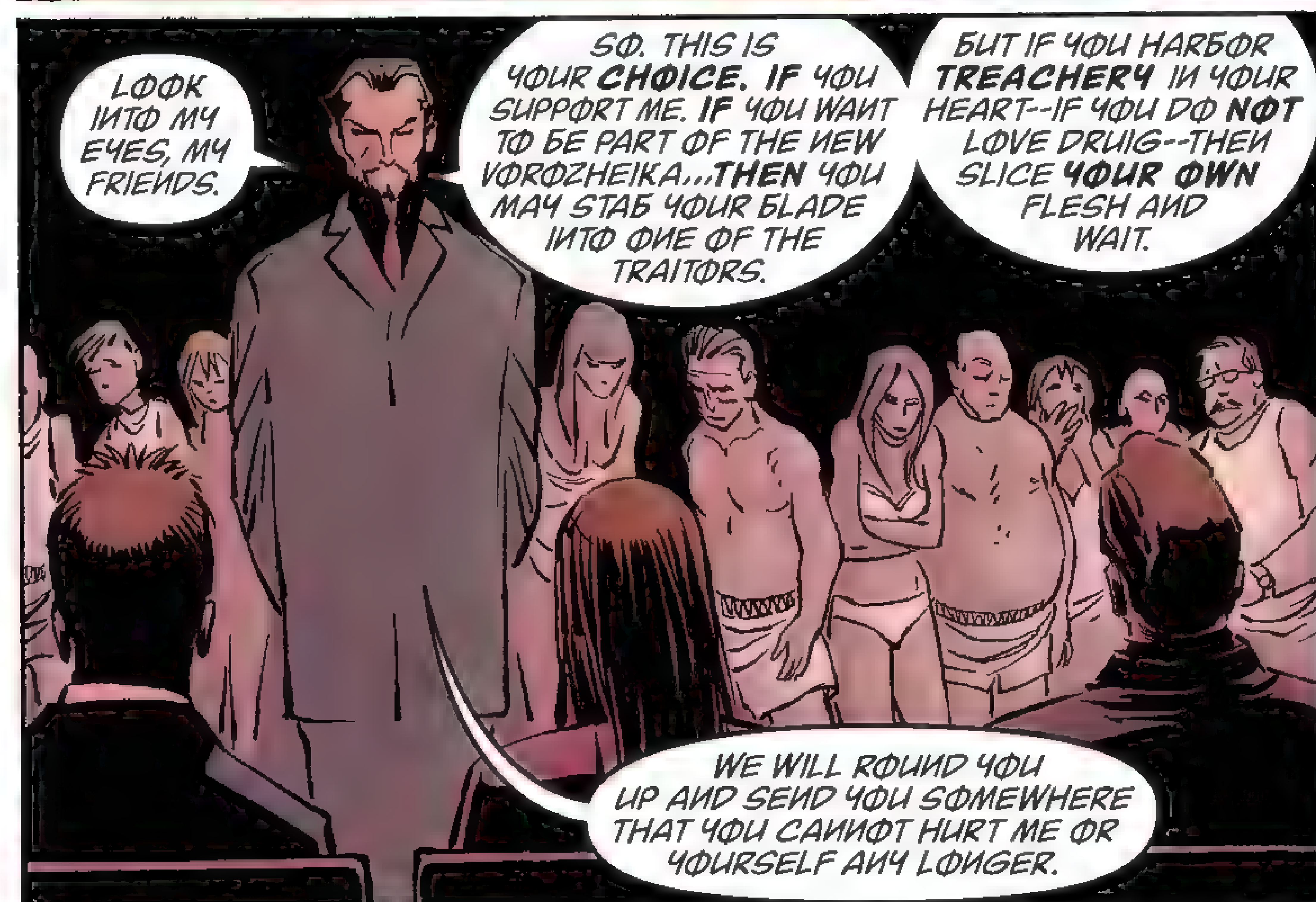

EVEN WHEN IT WAS WITHIN MY GRASP, I REJECTED THE PRIME MINISTERSHIP. I REMAINED DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER.
BRING THEM **IN,** VLADIMIR.


I CAME UP WITH A PLAN TO OBTAIN FIRST-RATE SCIENTIFIC MINDS FOR VOROZHEIKA. ALAS, SOME OF YOU, SOME SHORT-SIGHTED FEW OF YOU, DECIDED TO BETRAY ME.


PERHAPS SOME OF THE REST OF YOU KNEW OF THEIR PLANS. BUT I WILL NOT PUNISH YOU. I AM NOT A **VINDICTIVE** MAN.


EH, IVANOVICH?
GIVE THEM THE BOX CUTTERS, VLADIMIR.


IT WOULD BE ALL TOO EASY TO DRIVE YOU PEOPLE TO **MADNESS.** I WILL **NOT** DO THIS. I WANT A GOVERMENT OF **SANE** PEOPLE, WHO ARE NOT RULED BY **FEAR.**
I BELIEVE THAT YOU SHOULD BE OFFERED THE **OPPORTUNITY** TO BE PART OF THE NEW VOROZHEIKA. **MY** VOROZHEIKA.

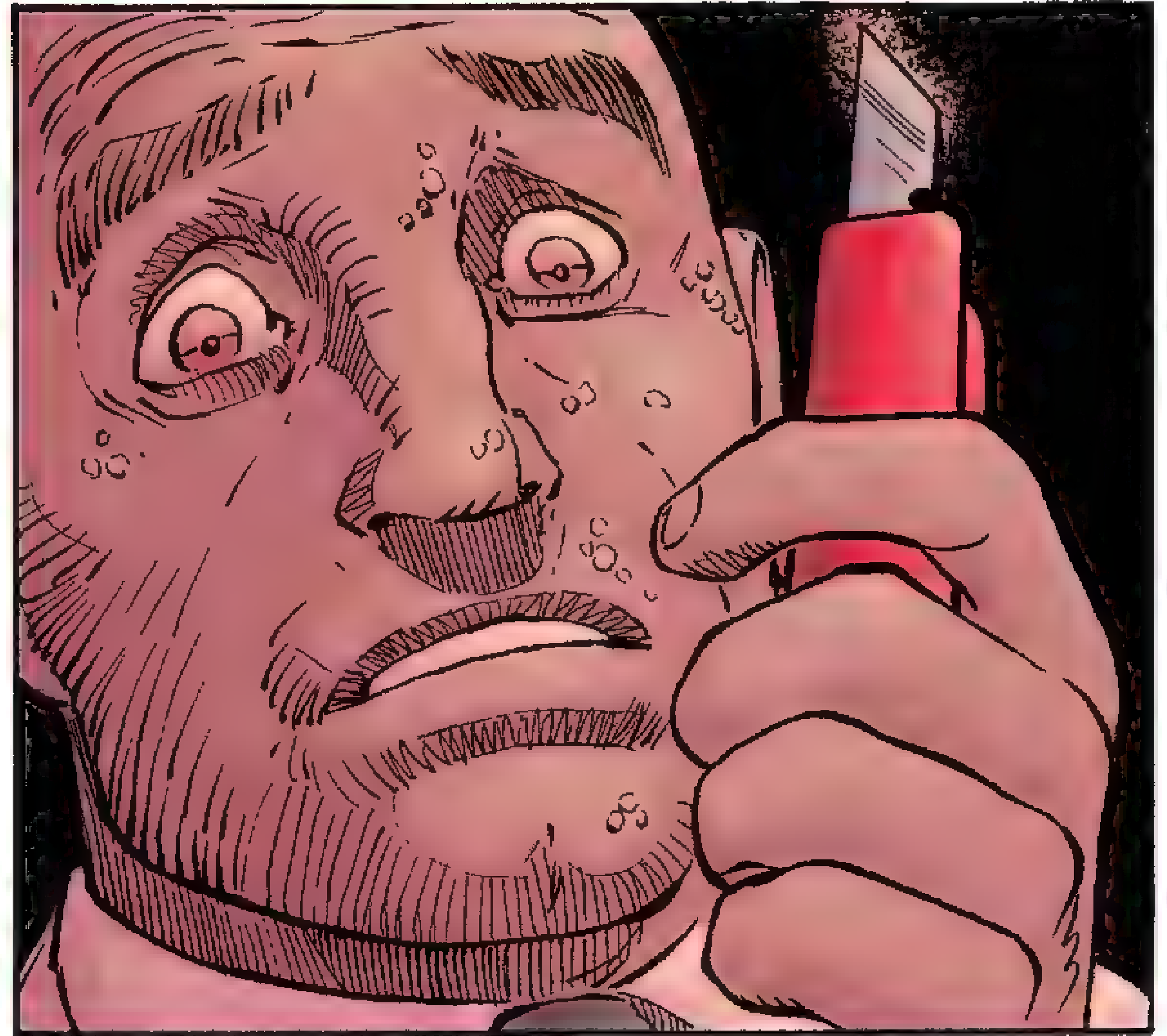

LOOK INTO MY EYES, MY FRIENDS.
SO. THIS IS YOUR **CHOICE. IF** YOU SUPPORT ME. **IF** YOU WANT TO BE PART OF THE NEW VOROZHEIKA...**THEN** YOU MAY STAB YOUR BLADE INTO ONE OF THE TRAITORS.
BUT IF YOU HARBOR **TREACHERY** IN YOUR HEART--IF YOU DO **NOT** LOVE DRUIG--THEN SLICE **YOUR OWN** FLESH AND WAIT.
WE WILL ROUND YOU UP AND SEND YOU SOMEWHERE THAT YOU CANNOT HURT ME OR YOURSELF ANY LONGER.


AND THEN, A **NEW VOROZHEIKA.**


DIE, YOU MONSTER!


FOOLISH IVANOVICH. NOW. DO I HAVE TO **TELL** YOU WHAT TO DO NEXT?


THROAT, IVANOVICH. CUT YOUR THROAT NOW.






WHAT **HE** JUST TRIED TO DO. **DON'T** DO THAT.

HAIL DRUIG!

HAIL VØRØZHEIKA!

TOO EASY, HE THINKS. TOMORROW THEY WILL ANNOUNCE THAT ATROCITIES HAVE BEEN COMMITTED BY...

WHO?

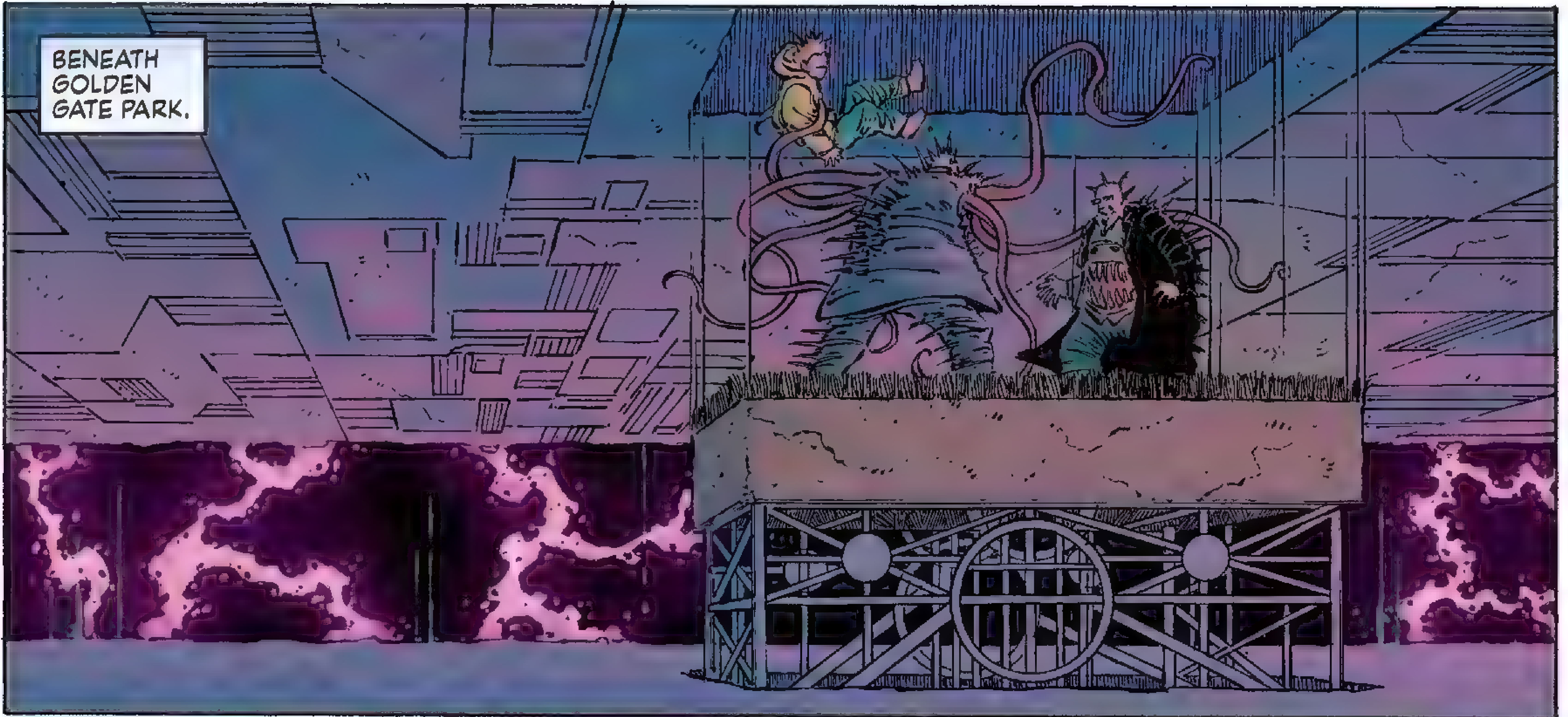
GYPSIES, PERHAPS. OR HOMOSEXUALS. OR SLAVS.

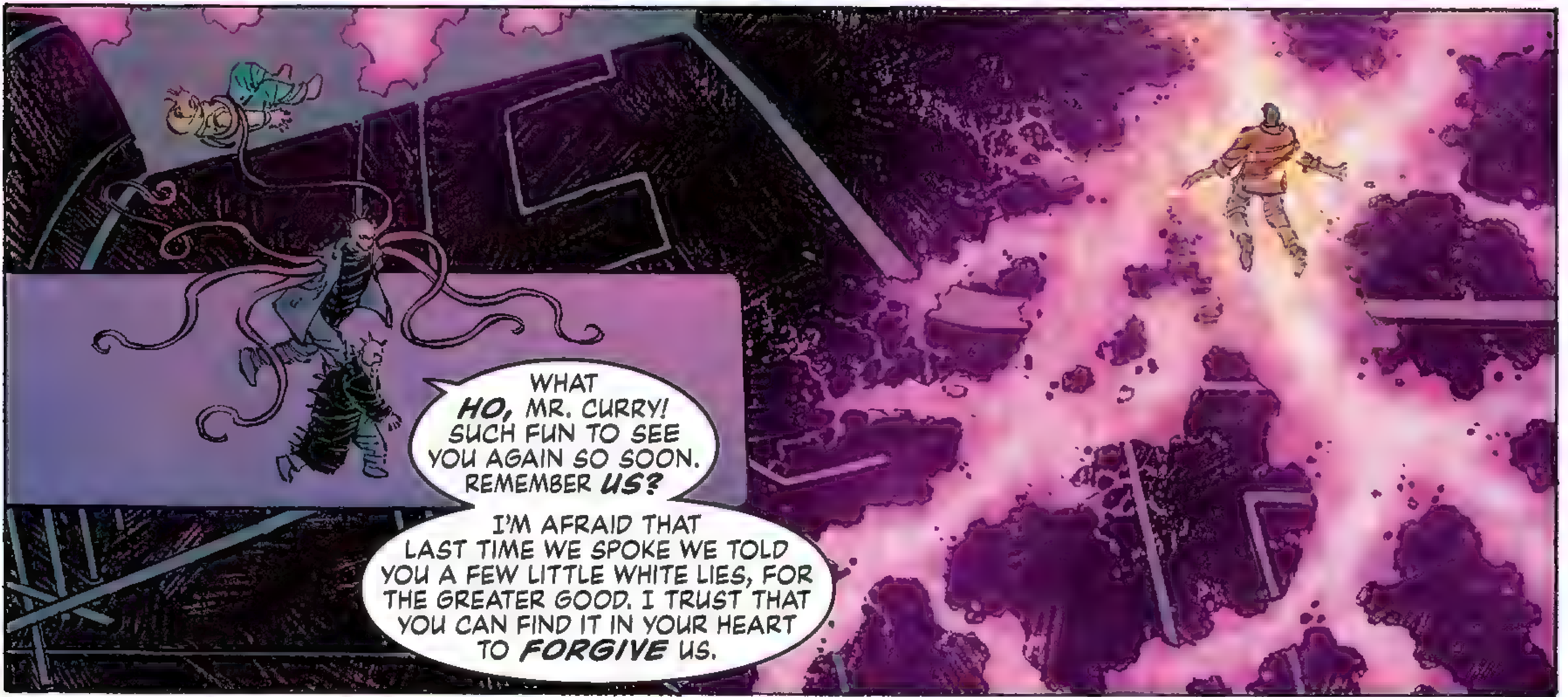
AND HE WILL HAVE THEM ROUNDED UP.

AND IT WILL BE NECESSARY TO BRING BACK THE SECRET POLICE.

AND WITHOUT QUITE KNOWING WHY, HE FEELS LIKE THIS IS A RETURN TO THE GOOD OLD DAYS.

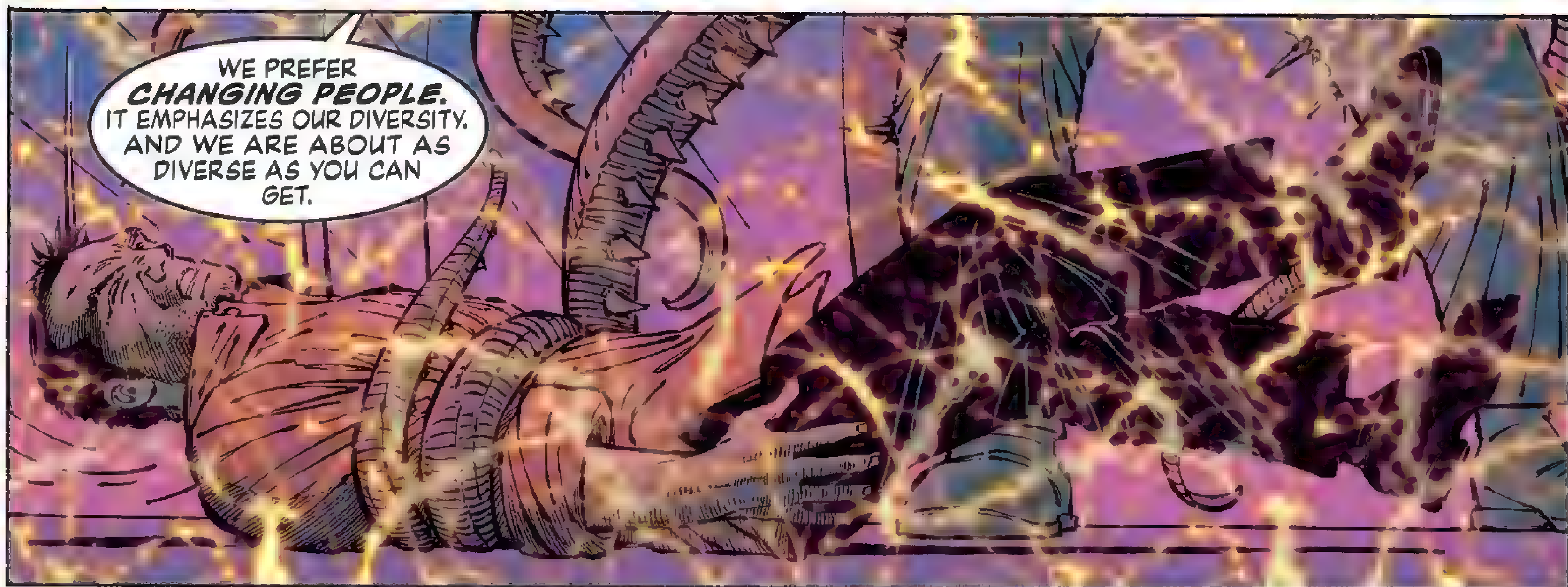
THE VERY OLD DAYS.


BENEATH GOLDEN GATE PARK.


WHAT *HO,* MR. CURRY! SUCH FUN TO SEE YOU AGAIN SO SOON. REMEMBER *US?*
I'M AFRAID THAT LAST TIME WE SPOKE WE TOLD YOU A FEW LITTLE WHITE LIES, FOR THE GREATER GOOD. I TRUST THAT YOU CAN FIND IT IN YOUR HEART TO *FORGIVE* US.


I AM *MORJAK.* MY FRIEND OVER THERE IS *GELT.* WE ARE TWO OF THE *CHANGING PEOPLE.* THAT'S WHAT WE CALL OURSELVES, ANYWAY.
YOU ETERNALS HAVE YOUR OWN NAMES FOR US.
Deviants. Mongrels. Subhumans. Scum.



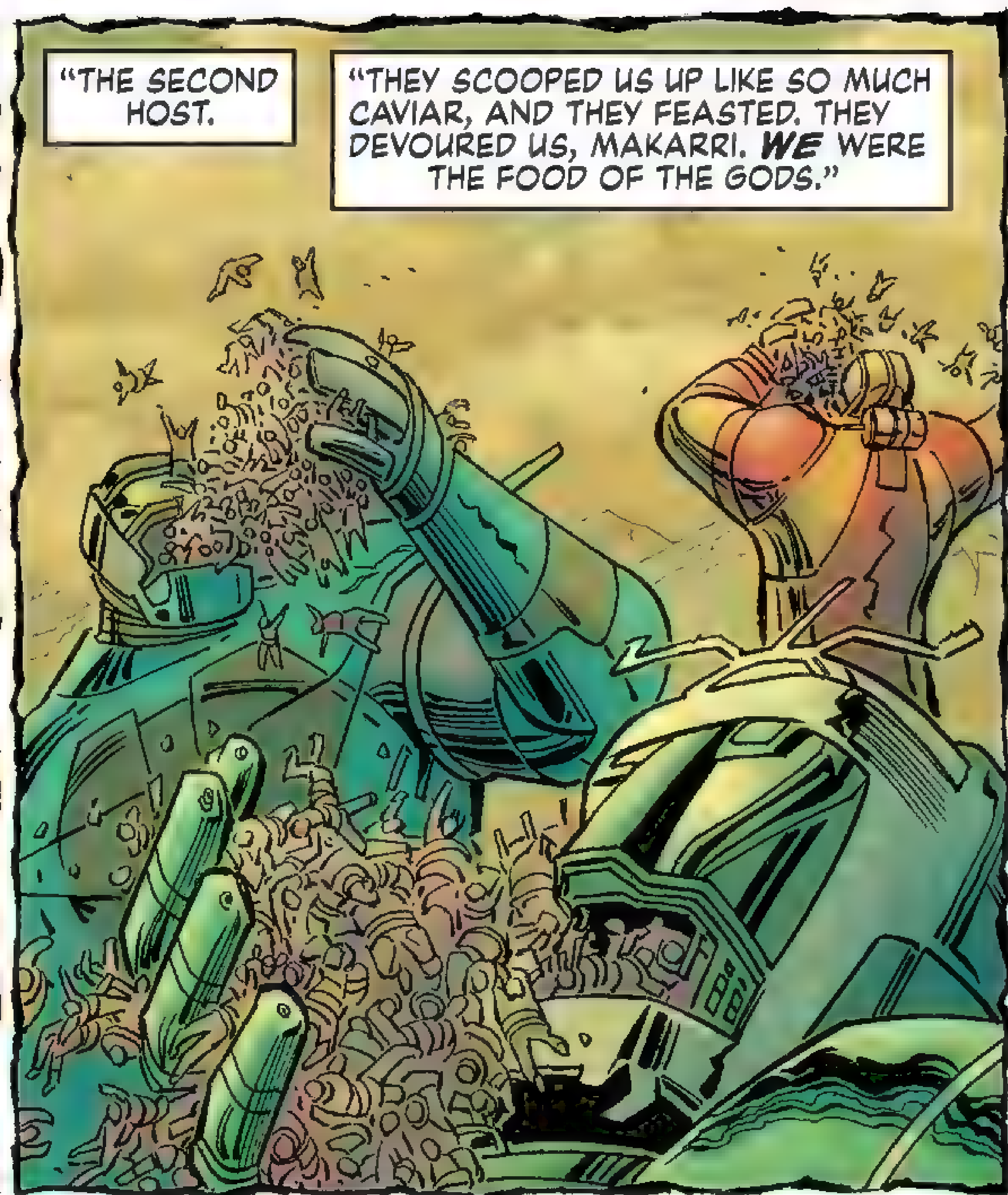

WE PREFER CHANGING PEOPLE. IT EMPHASIZES OUR DIVERSITY. AND WE ARE ABOUT AS DIVERSE AS YOU CAN GET.

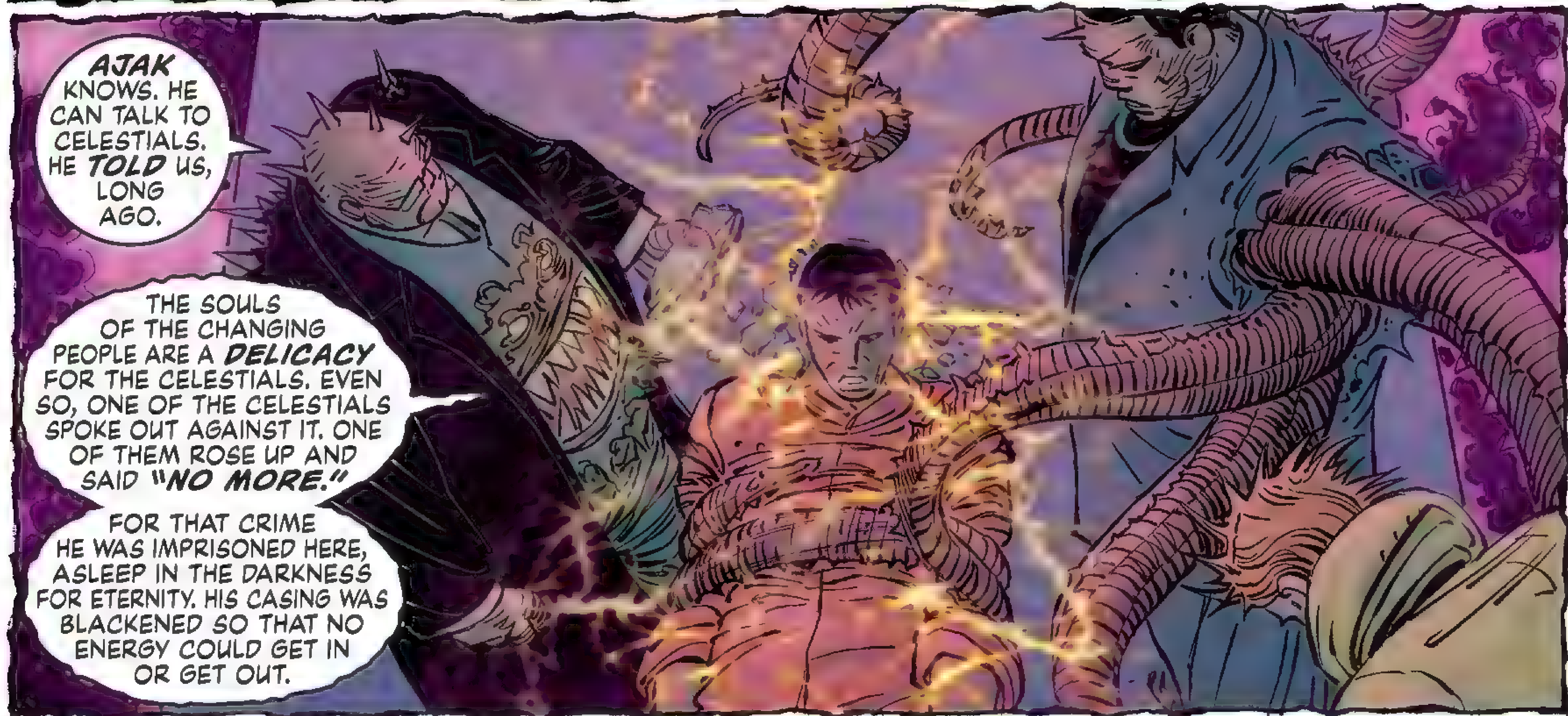

LET GO OF ME!
GELT, PUT SOMETHING IN THE LITTLE ONE'S MOUTH. OR CHEW OFF ITS TONGUE.
NO!
Then you...be quiet...

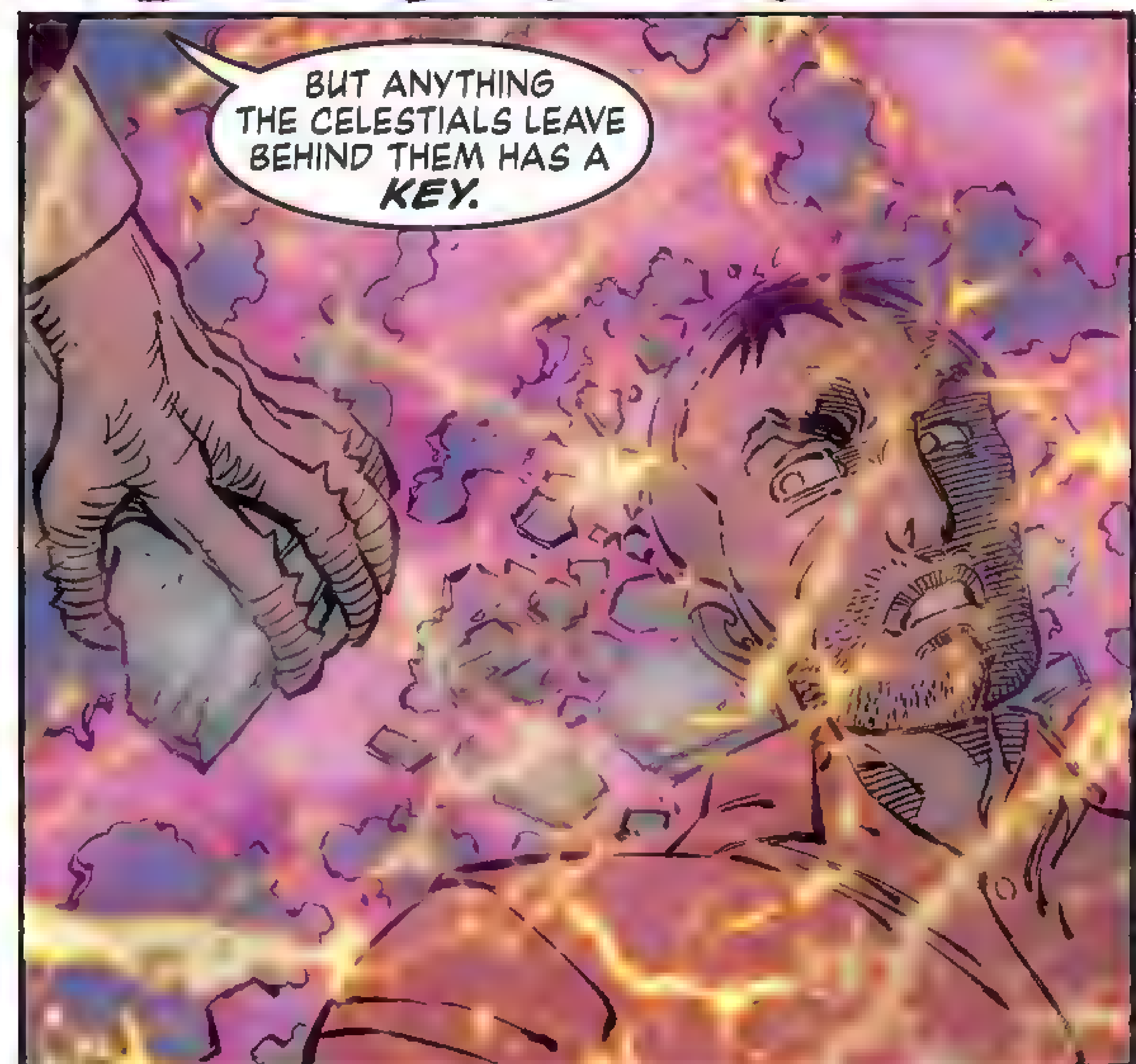

YOU ETERNALS HAVE LONG LIVES, BUT SHORT MEMORIES. THE CHANGING PEOPLE HAVE SHORT LIVES, BUT WE DO NOT FORGET.


DON'T EXPECT US TO KILL YOU, EITHER. IT WAS HARD ENOUGH KILLING IKARIS. HE WON'T BE GRATEFUL. YOU'LL SEE. ANYWAY, ONE FULL ETERNAL IS ENOUGH.
IT WAS A CRIME AGAINST LIFE. THAT WAS WHAT THE CELESTIALS TOLD AJAK. AND THAT WAS TRUE IN ITS WAY.

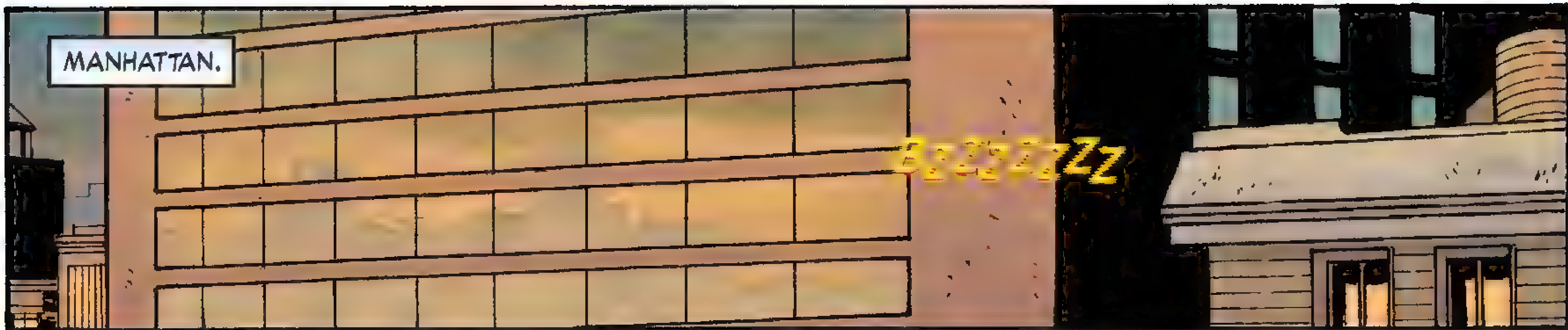

THE CELESTIALS PLANTED US, AFTER ALL. THEY TOOK THE HUMAN TEMPLATE, GRAFTED AND REJIGGED IT, AND THEN THEY SENT US OUT TO BE FRUITFUL AND MULTIPLY.
AND THEN, WHEN THERE WERE ENOUGH OF US, THEY CAME BACK.


"THE SECOND HOST.
"THEY SCOOPED US UP LIKE SO MUCH CAVIAR, AND THEY FEASTED. THEY DEVOURED US, MAKARRI. WE WERE THE FOOD OF THE GODS."


AJAK KNOWS. HE CAN TALK TO CELESTIALS. HE TOLD US, LONG AGO.
THE SOULS OF THE CHANGING PEOPLE ARE A DELICACY FOR THE CELESTIALS. EVEN SO, ONE OF THE CELESTIALS SPOKE OUT AGAINST IT. ONE OF THEM ROSE UP AND SAID "NO MORE."
FOR THAT CRIME HE WAS IMPRISONED HERE, ASLEEP IN THE DARKNESS FOR ETERNITY. HIS CASING WAS BLACKENED SO THAT NO ENERGY COULD GET IN OR GET OUT.

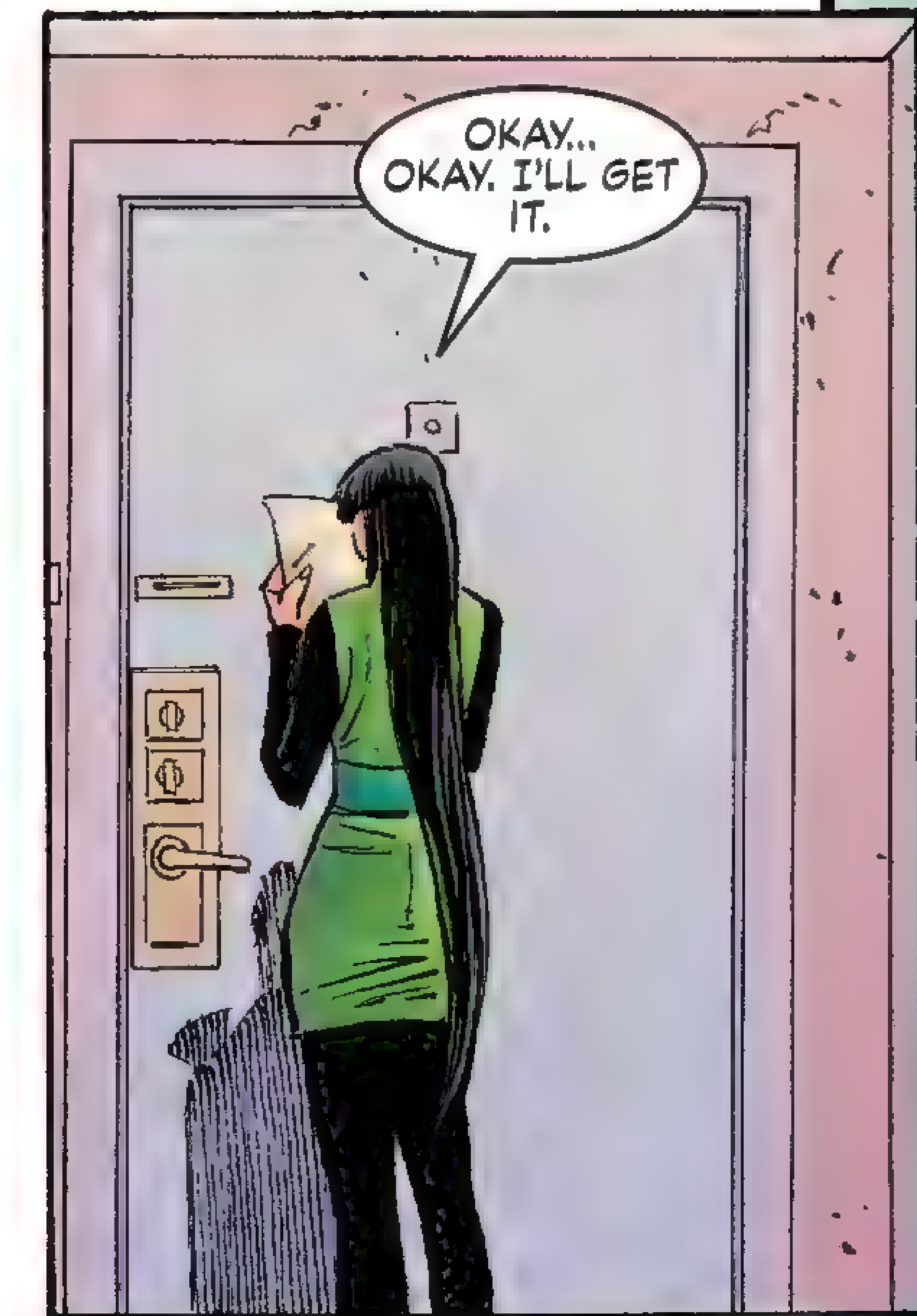

BUT ANYTHING THE CELESTIALS LEAVE BEHIND THEM HAS A KEY.


AND THE KEY IS ALWAYS THE ETERNALS.









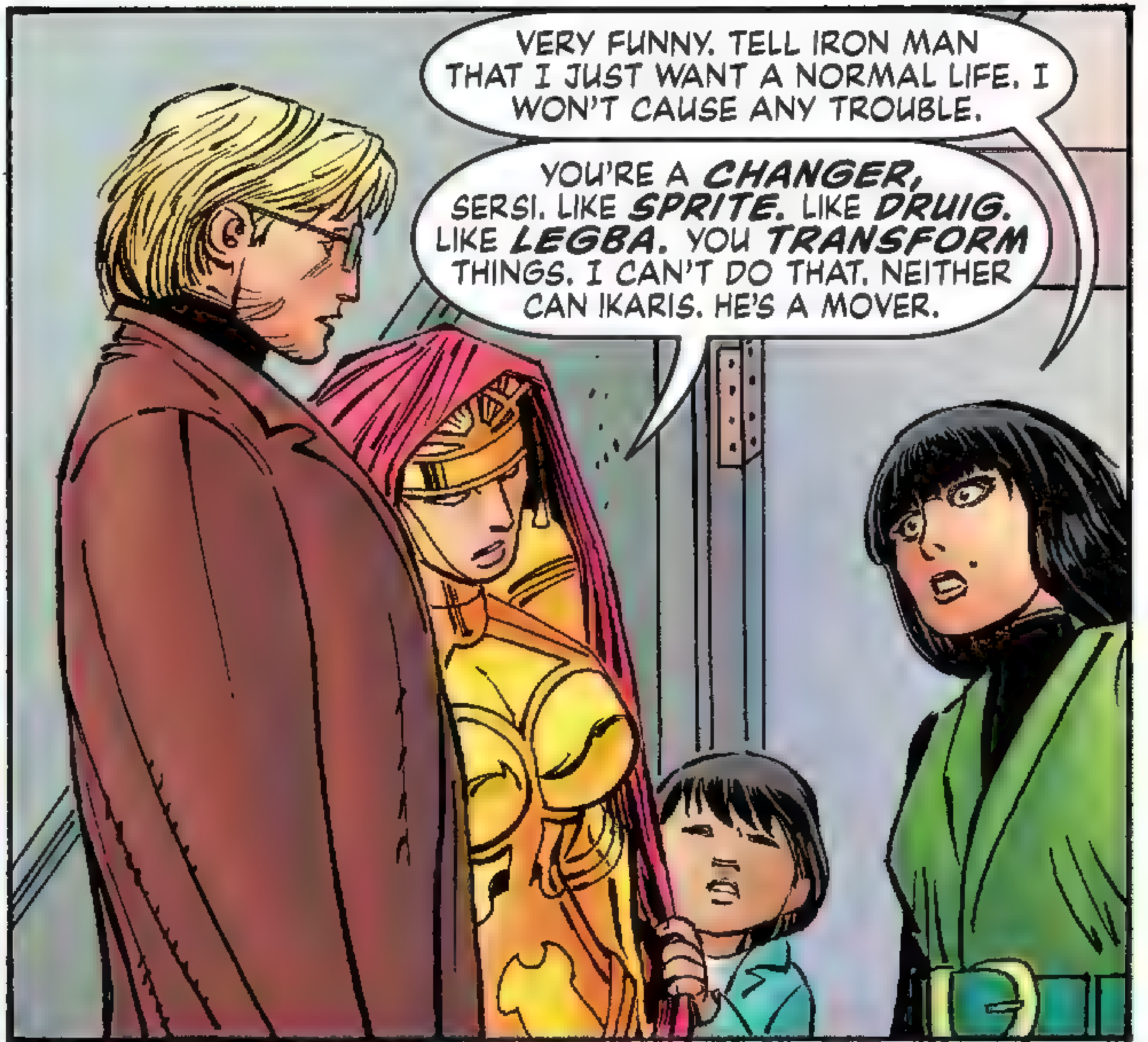
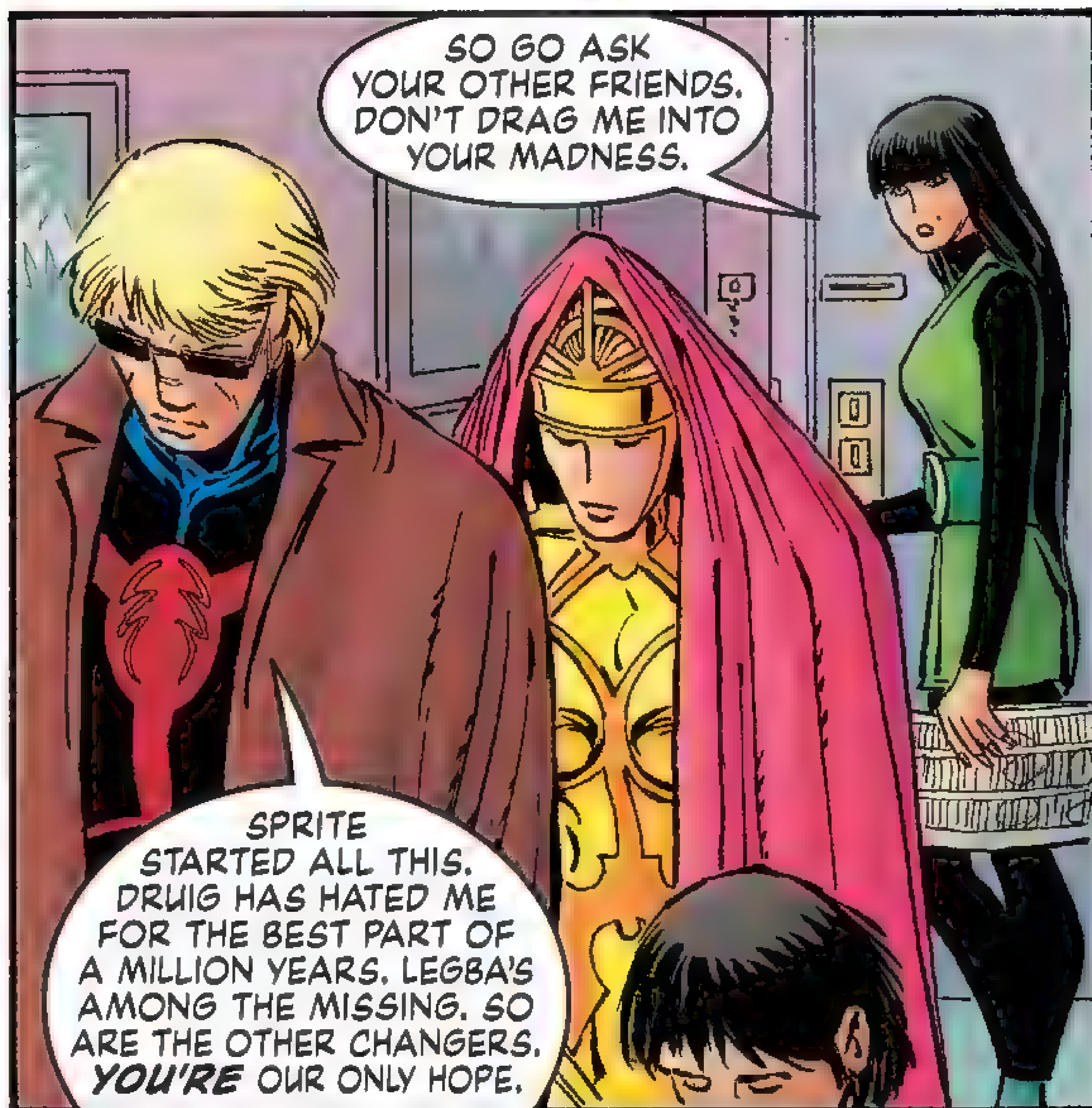
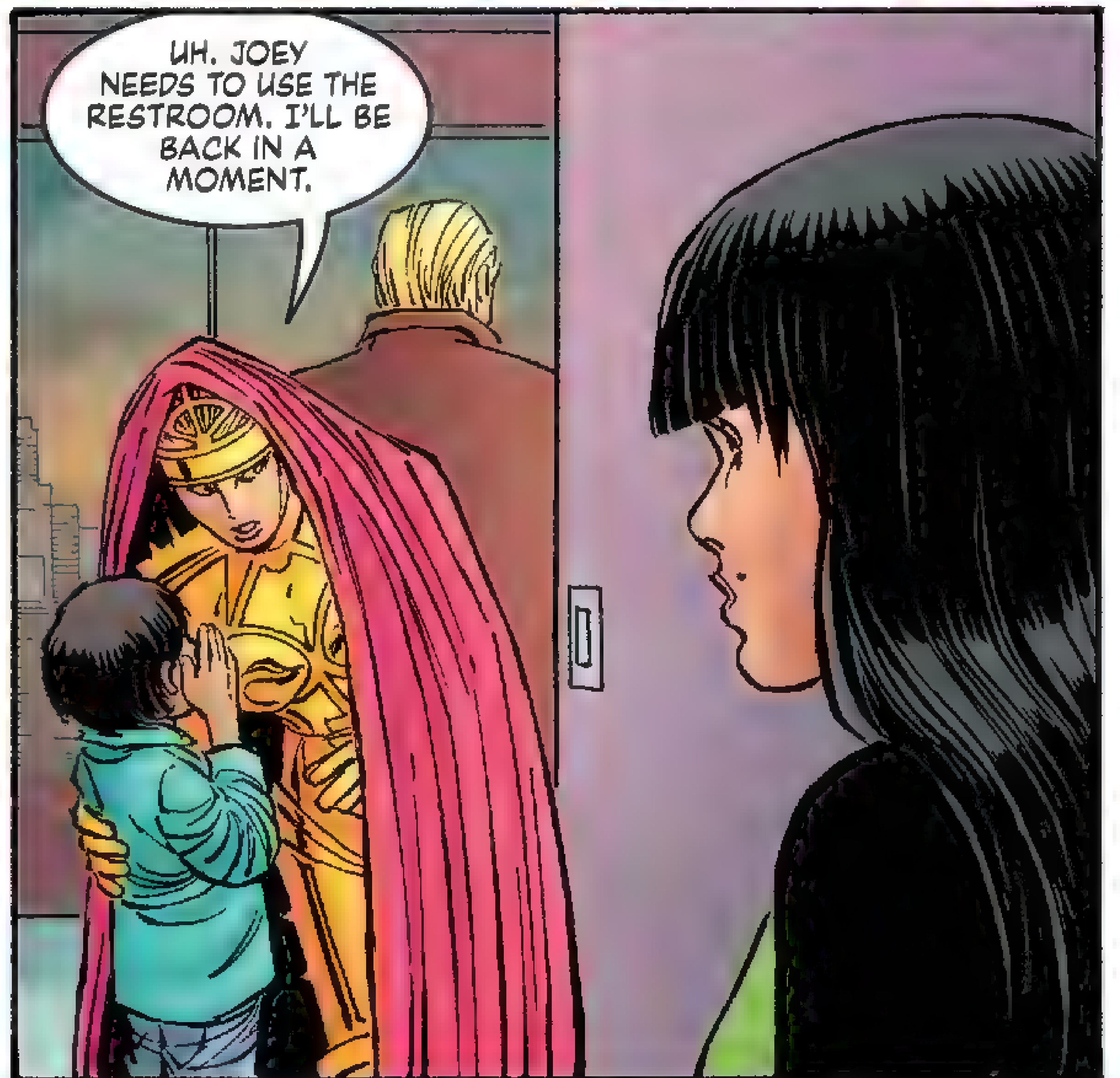
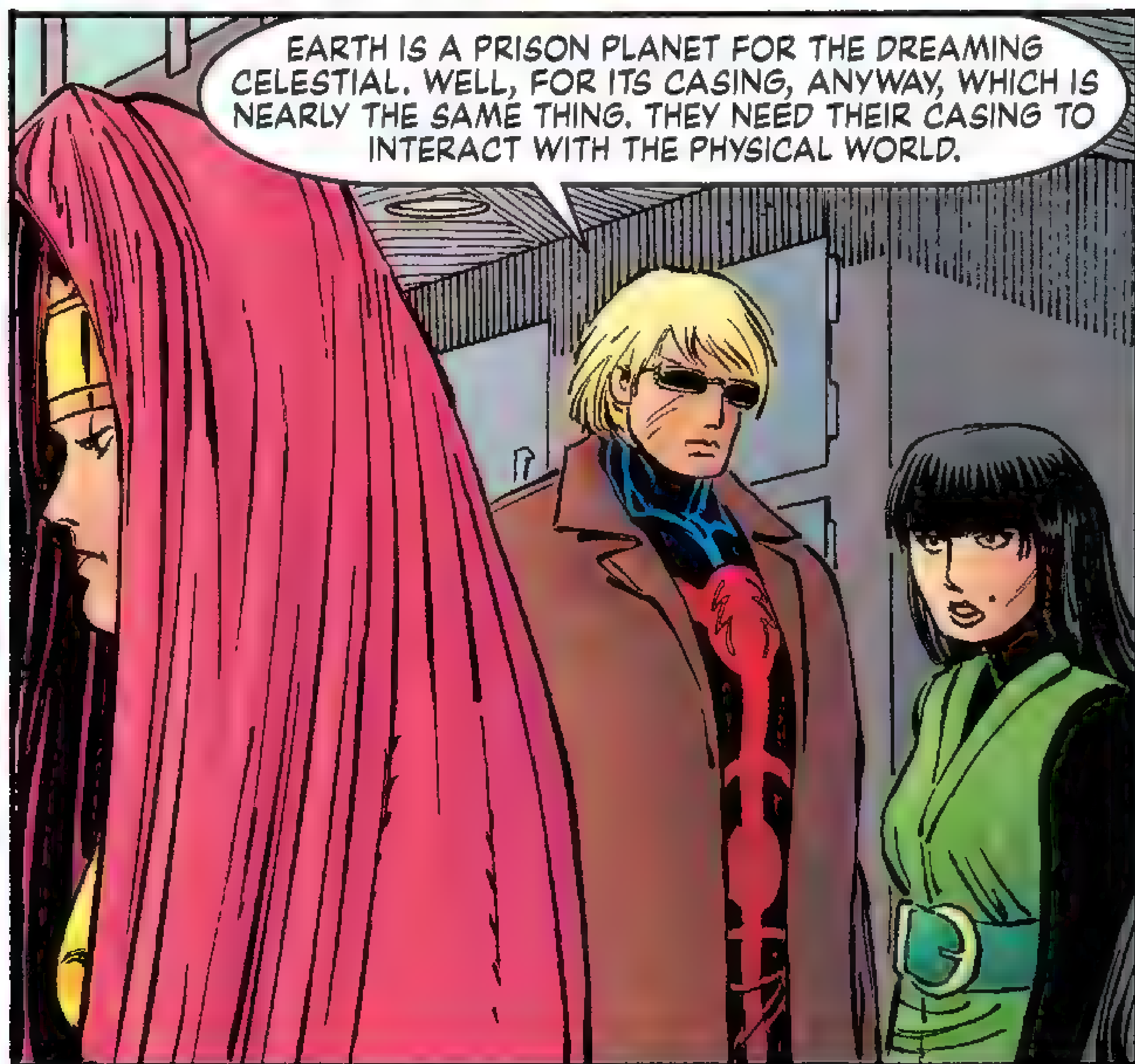
HELLO, SERSI. WE NEED TO TALK TO YOU. I'M IKARIS. THIS IS...

IT'S OKAY. I GET IT. YOU'RE SUPER HEROES. THIS IS LIKE AN ARREST, I'LL BE DRAGGED OFF TO A SECRET GOVERNMENT CIA TORTURE CAMP UNTIL I SIGN YOUR FRICKIN' LOYALTY PLEDGE.

WELL, GO ON. ARREST ME.

WE AREN'T SUPER HEROES, SERSI.

YOU'RE WALKING AN INCH ABOVE THE FLOOR. OF COURSE YOU'RE A FRICKIN' SUPER HERO. WHAT ELSE WOULD YOU BE?

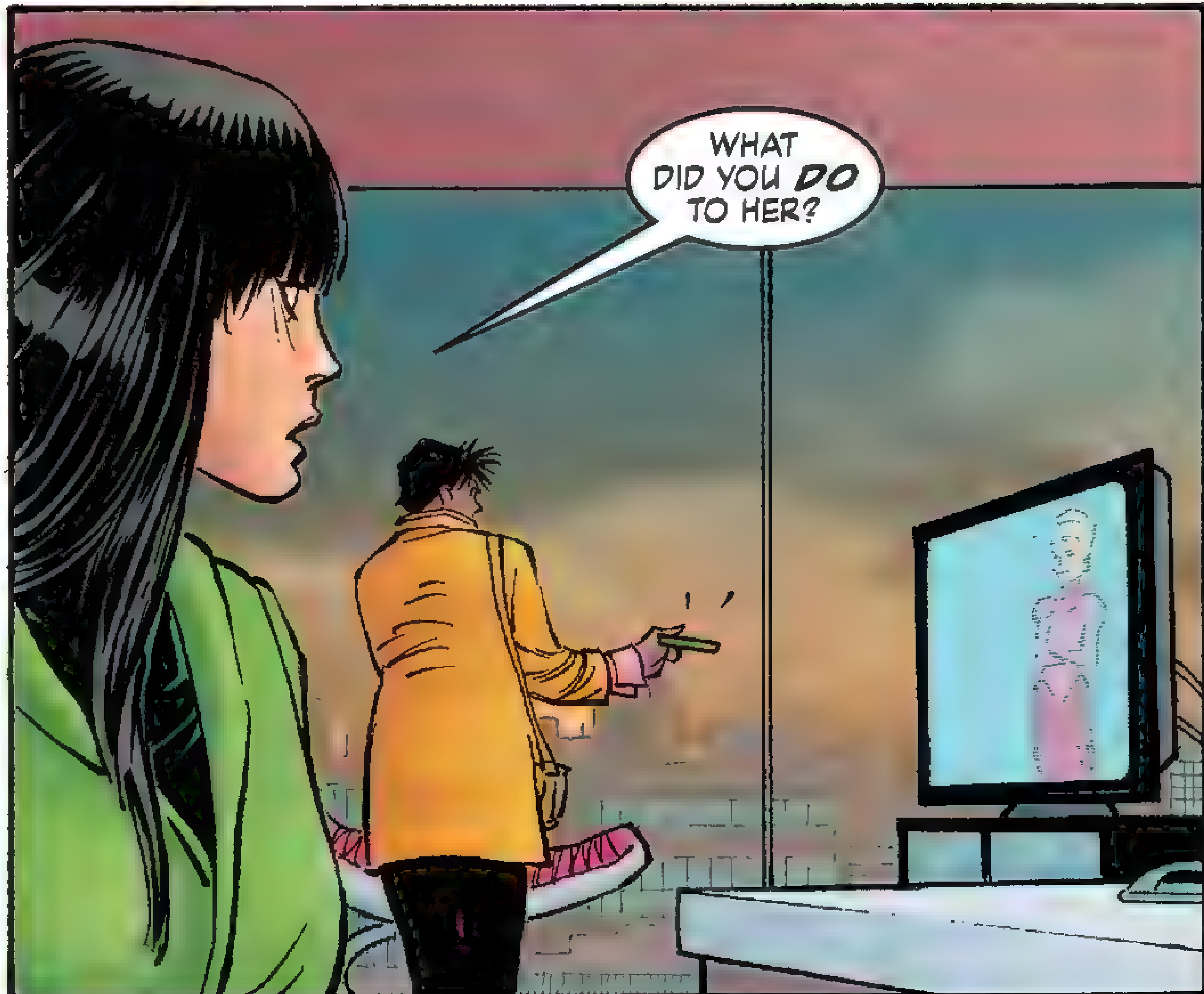

I'M A HUMANOID-BASED REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE UNIT LEFT BEHIND BY UNKNOWABLE ALIEN GODS TO MAKE SURE THAT THE EARTH IS STILL HERE AND IN GOOD SHAPE WHEN THEY GET BACK. JUST LIKE YOU ARE.
AND IF YOU DON'T HELP US, IT WON'T BE. NO PLANET. NOTHING.

VERY FUNNY. TELL IRON MAN THAT I JUST WANT A NORMAL LIFE. I WON'T CAUSE ANY TROUBLE.
YOU'RE A CHANGER, SERSI. LIKE SPRITE. LIKE DRUIG. LIKE LEGBA. YOU TRANSFORM THINGS. I CAN'T DO THAT. NEITHER CAN IKARIS. HE'S A MOVER.

SO GO ASK YOUR OTHER FRIENDS. DON'T DRAG ME INTO YOUR MADNESS.
SPRITE STARTED ALL THIS. DRUIG HAS HATED ME FOR THE BEST PART OF A MILLION YEARS. LEGBA'S AMONG THE MISSING. SO ARE THE OTHER CHANGERS. YOU'RE OUR ONLY HOPE.

UH. JOEY NEEDS TO USE THE RESTROOM. I'LL BE BACK IN A MOMENT.

EARTH IS A PRISON PLANET FOR THE DREAMING CELESTIAL. WELL, FOR ITS CASING, ANYWAY, WHICH IS NEARLY THE SAME THING. THEY NEED THEIR CASING TO INTERACT WITH THE PHYSICAL WORLD.

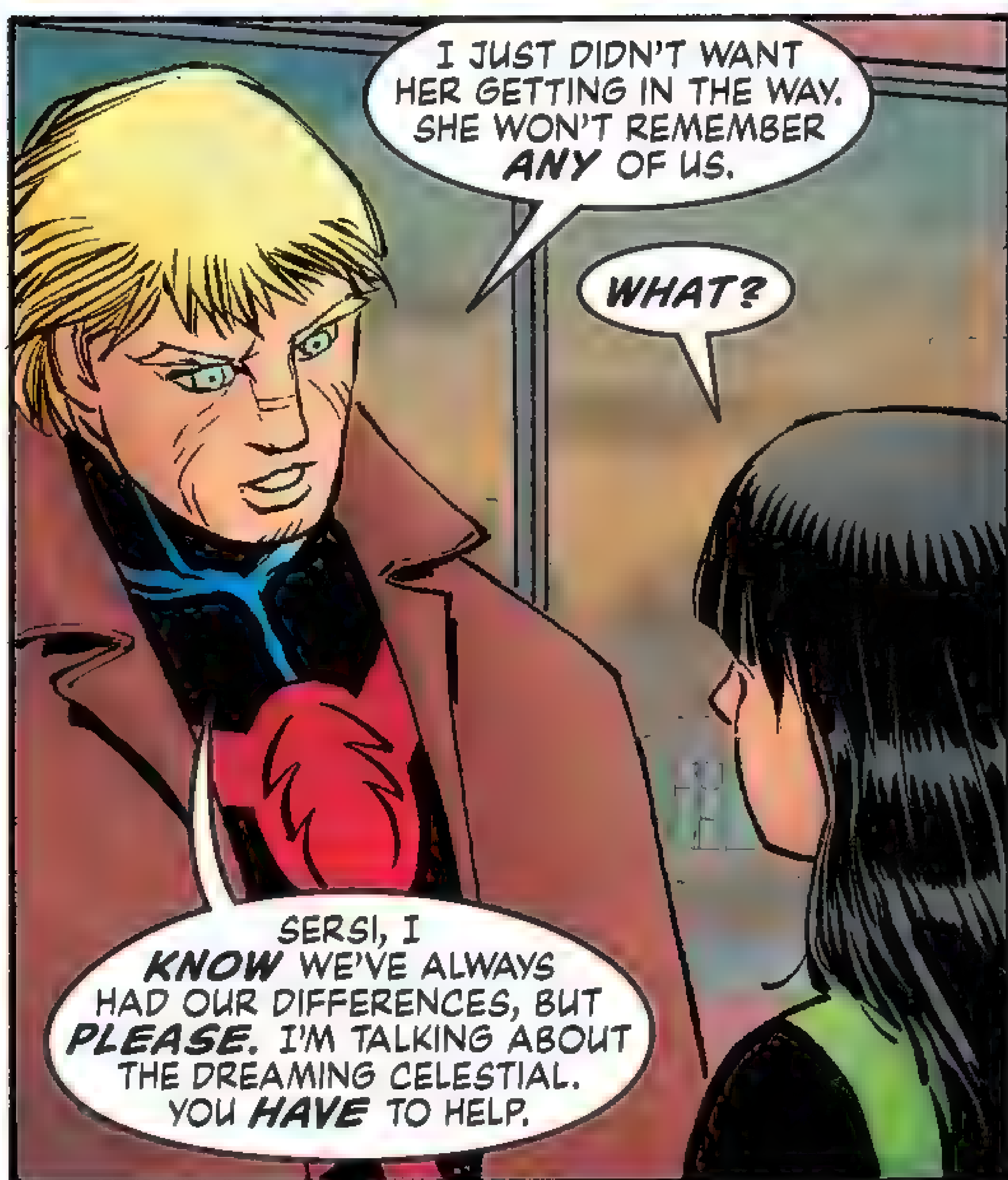
TAKE MY HANDS...IT WILL ALL MAKE SENSE.
A MILLION YEARS OF MEMORIES, SERSI.
TRUST ME.

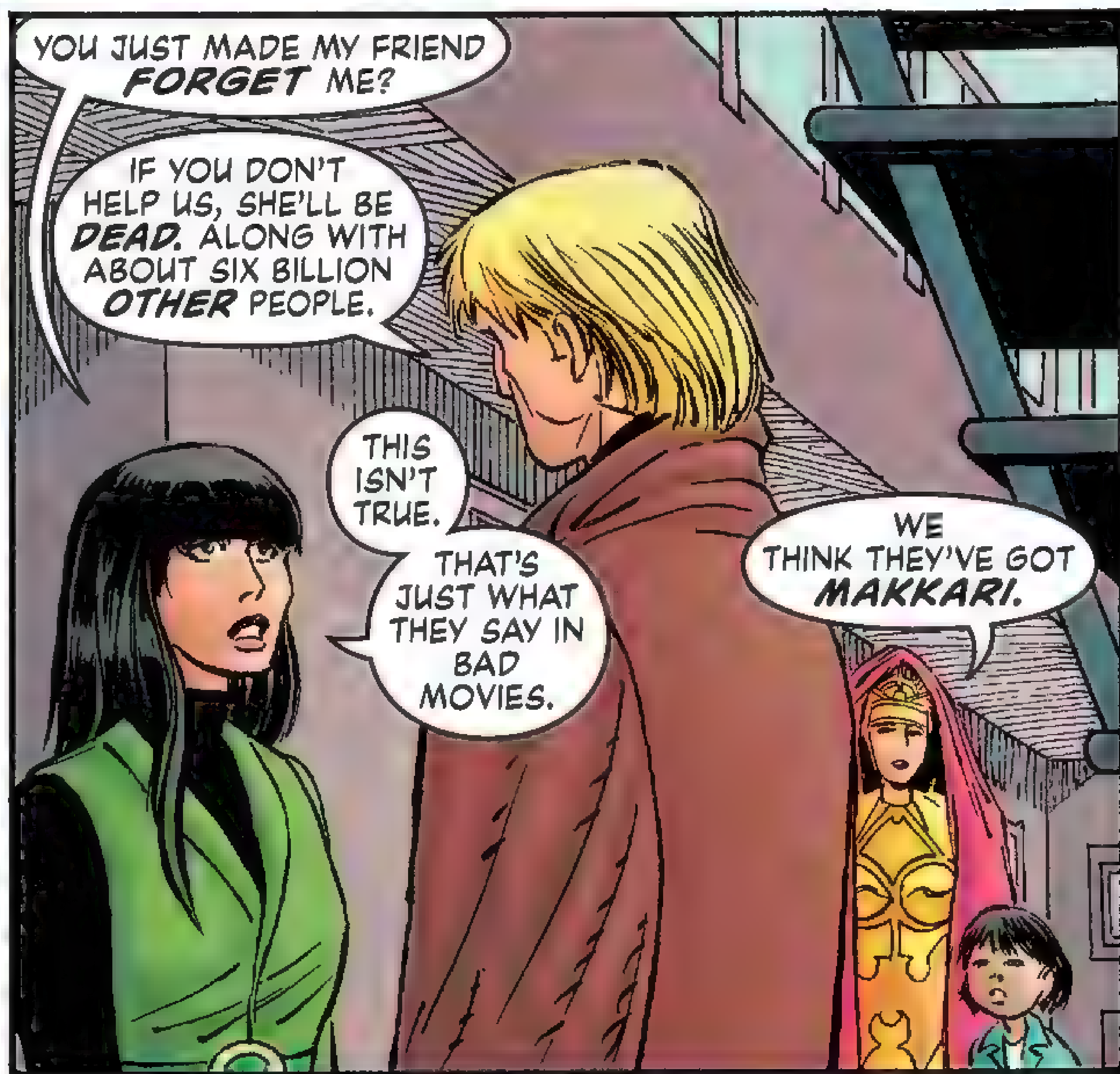

SERSI? WHAT THE HECK? IS EVERYTHING OKAY?
I'M CALLING THE POLICE...

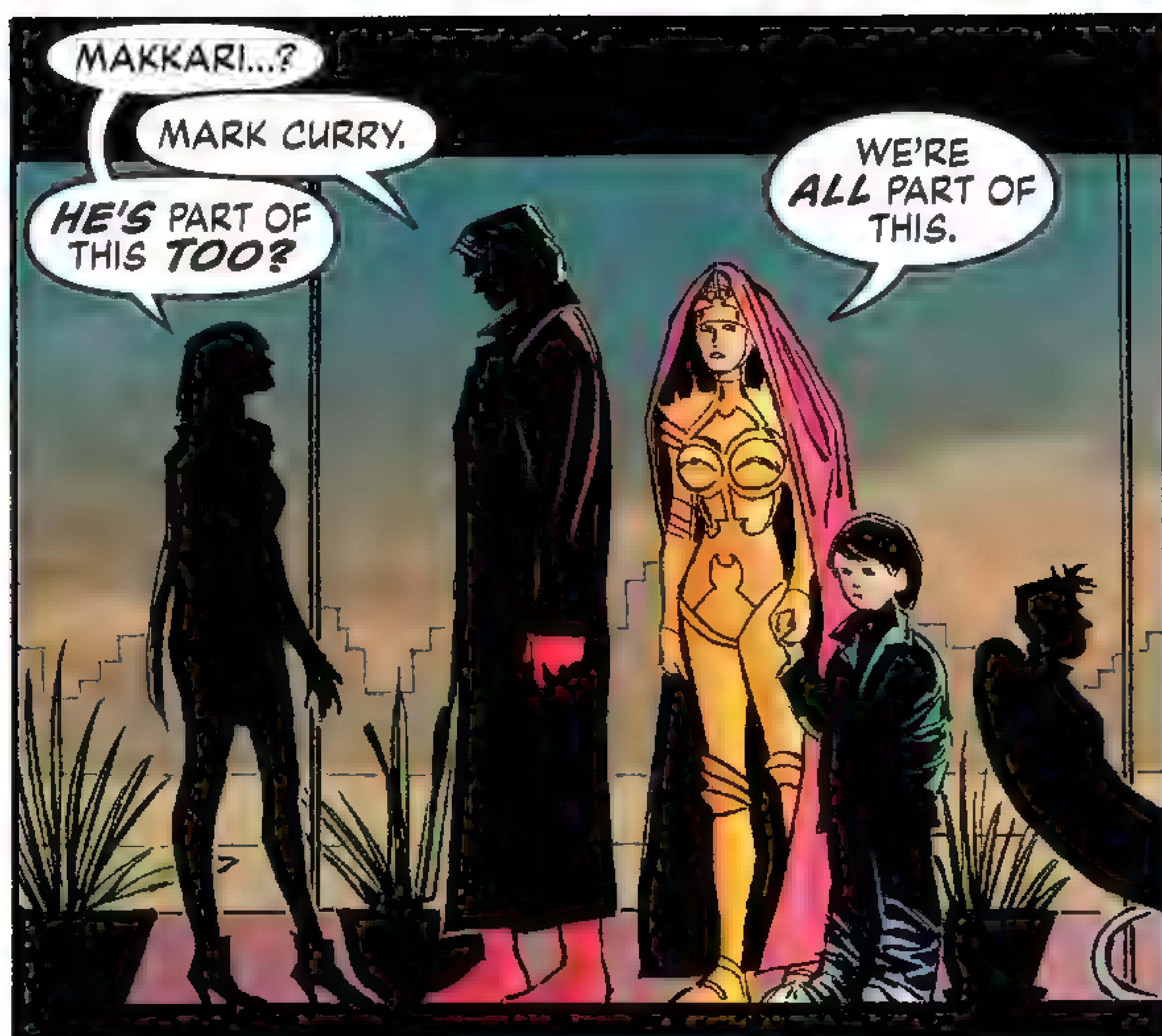

SORRY ABOUT THIS, MISS. YOU KNOW, IT'S PROBABLY BEST IF YOU FORGET US.
ALL OF US.




WHAT DID YOU DO TO HER?


I JUST DIDN'T WANT HER GETTING IN THE WAY. SHE WON'T REMEMBER ANY OF US.
WHAT?
SERSI, I KNOW WE'VE ALWAYS HAD OUR DIFFERENCES, BUT PLEASE. I'M TALKING ABOUT THE DREAMING CELESTIAL. YOU HAVE TO HELP.


YOU JUST MADE MY FRIEND FORGET ME?
IF YOU DON'T HELP US, SHE'LL BE DEAD. ALONG WITH ABOUT SIX BILLION OTHER PEOPLE.
THIS ISN'T TRUE.
THAT'S JUST WHAT THEY SAY IN BAD MOVIES.
WE THINK THEY'VE GOT MAKKARI.


MAKKARI...?
MARK CURRY.
HE'S PART OF THIS TOO?
WE'RE ALL PART OF THIS.

LET ME INTO YOUR MIND, SERSI. I CAN MAKE YOU WHOLE AGAIN.
OVER MY DEAD FRICKIN' BODY. WHAT ABOUT THE KID? WHAT'S THE DEAL WITH HIM?

THIS IS JOEY. HE'S MY SON. I'M NOT LEAVING HIM BEHIND.
HOLD ON. YOU'RE DOCTOR ELIOT? YOU WERE AT MY PARTY.
YES, HON. THAT'S WHERE JOEY'S DADDY WAS K-I-L-L-E-D.
DADDY WAS WHAT?

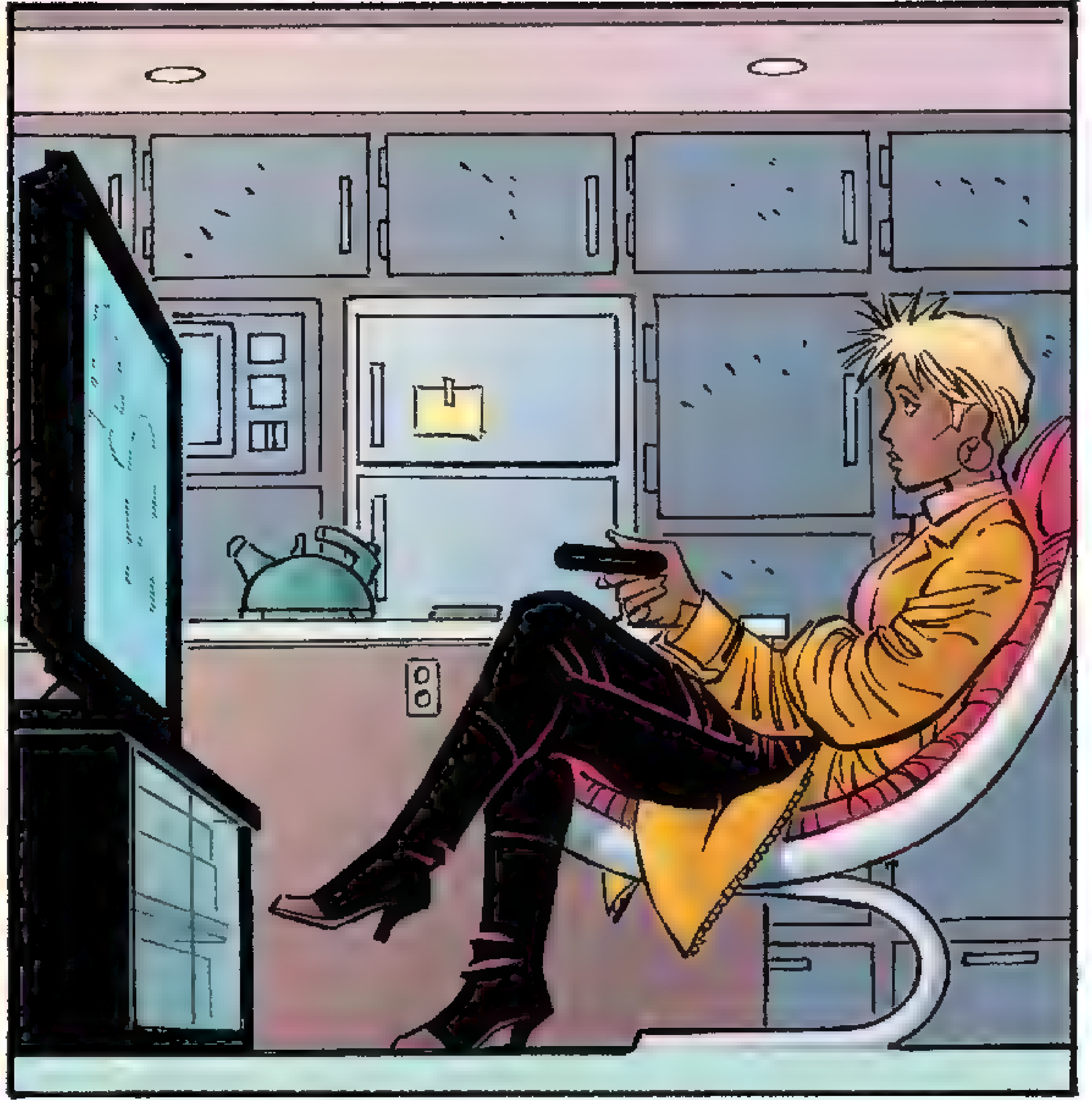
AND IKARIS TURNED YOU INTO THAT?
I WAS THIS ALL ALONG.
IF I...IF I GO ALONG WITH THIS...WHAT WOULD I TURN INTO?
YOU'RE JUST THE SAME. BETTER HAIR, MAYBE.

IF I HELP YOU, WILL YOU MAKE IT SO THAT ABI KNOWS WHO I AM AGAIN?

YOU COULD DO THAT YOURSELF.
I AM SO GOING TO REGRET THIS.

DO IT.








SHE'S GONE ALREADY.
YES.
WE STILL NEED A CHANGER.
DRUIG, THEN?



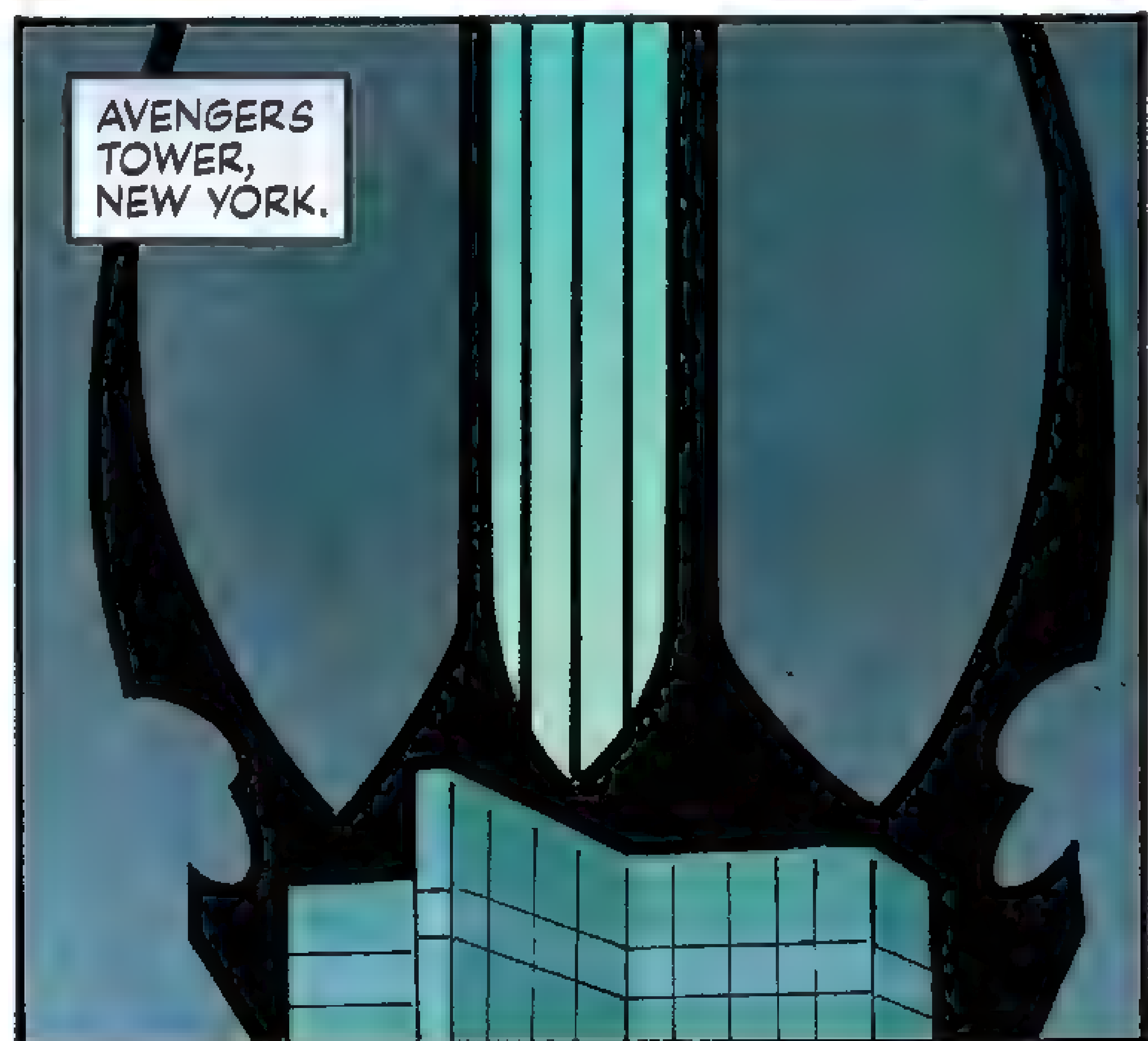

...FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER, WE'RE BRINGING SOMEONE BACK WHO HAS ALREADY BEEN TAKEN OUT OF THE CONTEST. BECAUSE IF YOU'RE A SUPER HERO, DOING THE RIGHT THING IS THE IMPORTANT THING TO DO. THE RIGHT THING. LIKE GETTING REGISTERED.
WELCOME BACK...GRACE DARLING...
THIS IS SUCH A DUMB SHOW.

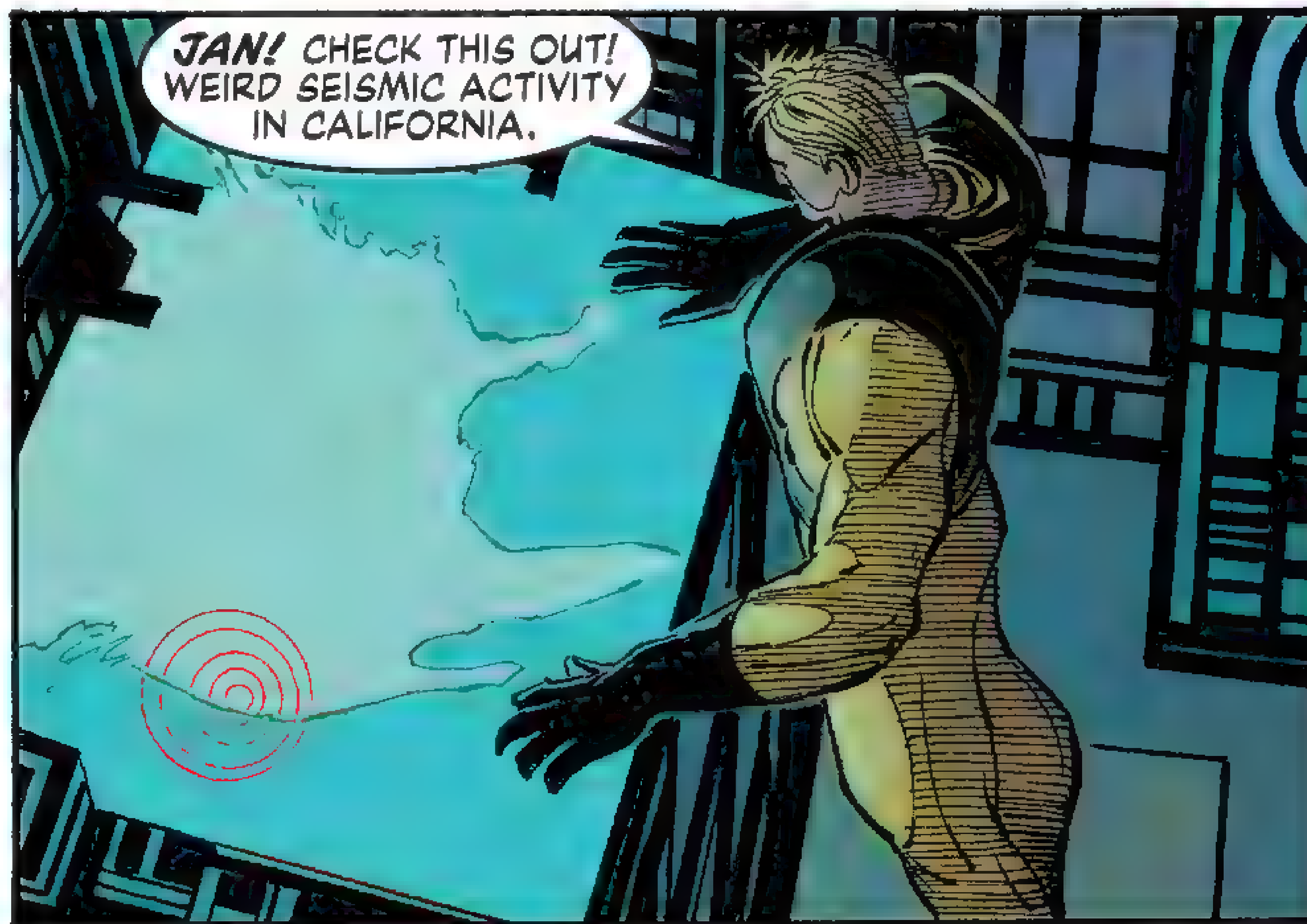

I DON'T GET IT. WHAT'S FLYING THIS?
I AM.
I MEAN, WHAT'S KEEPING IT UP? HOW IS IT MOVING THROUGH THE AIR?
I TOLD YOU. I AM.
SO WHEN AM I GOING TO START REMEMBERING? WHY DON'T I REMEMBER?
I DON'T KNOW. SOON.


I UNDERSTAND.
YOU WANT MY HELP.
AND YOU MAY HAVE IT. FOR A PRICE.

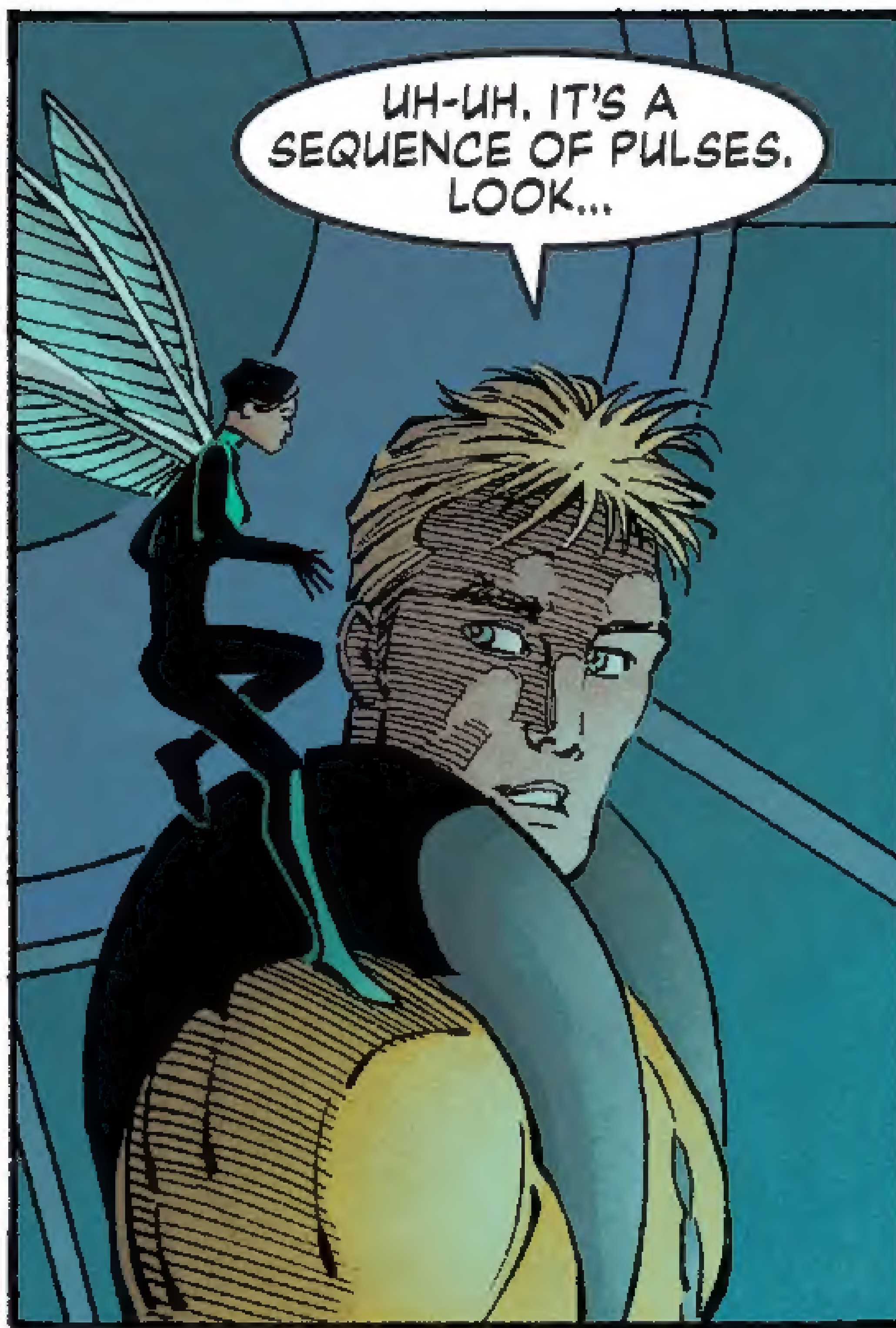

WHAT PRICE?


IF I HELP YOU, YOU DO NOTHING IN THE FUTURE TO INTERFERE WITH ME OR MY COUNTRY.
THAT'S NOT REALLY--
VERY WELL.


AVENGERS TOWER, NEW YORK.


JAN! CHECK THIS OUT! WEIRD SEISMIC ACTIVITY IN CALIFORNIA.

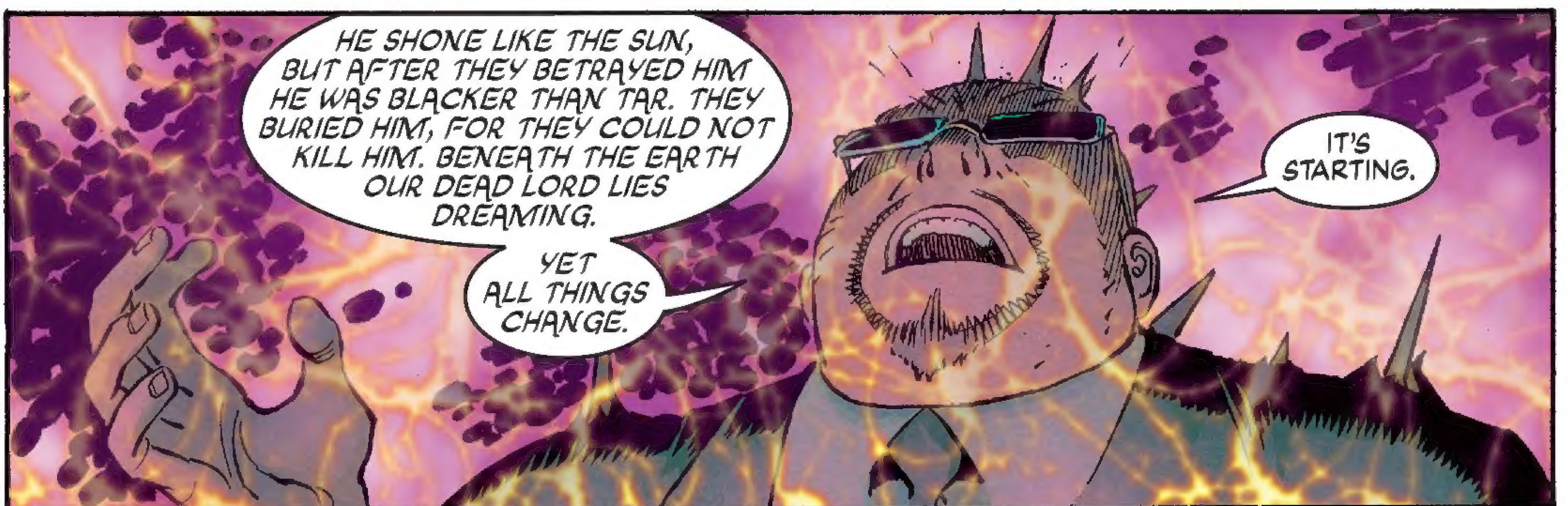

YOU THINK IT'S THE BIG ONE?


UH-UH. IT'S A SEQUENCE OF PULSES. LOOK...


TONY? THIS IS JAN AND HANK. WE THINK WE HAVE A SITUATION. COULD YOU COME HERE, PLEASE?


THIS IS CRAZY!
YOU CAN'T DO THIS!
OF COURSE WE CAN.


BUT YOU'LL KILL US ALL!
DO YOU HAVE NOTHING YOU WOULD GIVE YOUR LIFE FOR, BOY? HOW VERY EMPTY AND PURPOSELESS YOUR WORLD MUST BE.
THE DREAMER IS OUR CREATOR.
WE WOULD SACRIFICE OUR LIVES FOR HIM GLADLY.
HE gave his LIFE for us.
He gave his life for us.


HE SHONE LIKE THE SUN, BUT AFTER THEY BETRAYED HIM HE WAS BLACKER THAN TAR. THEY BURIED HIM, FOR THEY COULD NOT KILL HIM. BENEATH THE EARTH OUR DEAD LORD LIES DREAMING.
YET ALL THINGS CHANGE.
IT'S STARTING.


UNDERGROUND, WITHOUT SUNLIGHT, ENCASED IN BLACKNESS, HE SLEEPS AND HE DREAMS...












THERE...
NOW WE SIMPLY WAIT UNTIL DAWN.
UNTIL THE SUN RISES.
AND THE DREAMING CELESTIAL WAKES.
TO BE CONTINUED...





ZONE